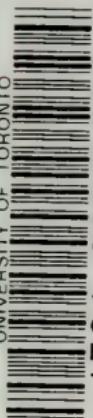


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L. Evans

from

W.B.

Jan. 3rd 1872.



Großes Kind Wagnen, Geta, auch Thyra
und Anselm und Gory; aber was ist es, selbst Anselm
Großes, ohne eine mitmenschliche Seele, mit der man
2. Thieren kann!

Nach ein Wunsch ich von dem
Verborgenen selbst Getaucht so
bedeute und so wenig eingetrieben,
jener, als in dem jenseitigen Dingen
bleib, die ich mich, mit ungenügend
Gehörig und Unwissenheit, von
Himmeln herab!

W. v. Humboldt.

(TRANSLATION.)

A vivid perception of the true, the good, and the beautiful, ennobles the soul, and exerts a beneficial influence upon the heart; but what is this feeling, without a congenial spirit with whom to share it?

Yet never was I so deeply and strongly impressed with the truth of this sentiment, as at the present moment, when I *must* part from you, with the uncertain hope of ever meeting again.

PYRMONT,
20th July
1788.

LETTERS

OF

WILLIAM VON HUMBOLDT

TO

A FEMALE FRIEND.

A COMPLETE EDITION,

Translated from the Second German Edition,

BY

CATHARINE M. A. COUPER,

AUTHOR OF "VISITS TO BEECHWOOD FARM," "LUCY'S HALF-CROWN," &c.

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF THE WRITER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

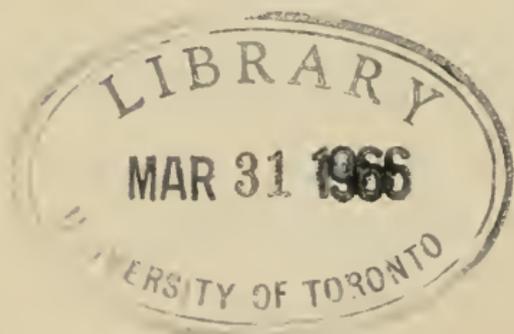
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* ERRATUM (in a few copies.)—For Taurus, 2d line of p. 324, read Taunus.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE

OF

WILLIAM VON HUMBOLDT.

THE biographical interest of the following letters has nothing in common with that vulgar hunt after notabilities which has deluged the modern literature of most countries with a weak and often offensive flood of gossip, scandal, and mere personal reminiscence. Their value is of a very different and more enduring kind. They contain the confidential reflections and advice of a rich and highly endowed mind, addressed to one whose sex, misfortunes, and position in life, rendered her peculiarly susceptible of the spiritual consolation and support which it is the aim of these letters to convey, and which she seems to have used so well and prized so highly. They derive little additional interest from the circumstances and history of the writer; and with regard to his correspondent, we know nothing beyond what is contained in the brief but interesting narrative she has herself prefixed to these volumes. Nevertheless, as it happens that the name of the writer has already attained a world-wide celebrity through his younger brother, whose extensive and indefatigable researches have enabled him to add so many rich contributions to geographical science, it has been judged advisable to prefix to this translation the following brief

outline of the life-history of the less known, but not less noble and generous, elder brother.

WILLIAM VON HUMBOLDT was born at Potsdam on the 22d June 1767. Berlin was the scene of his early education, and it is easy to imagine that the varied life of the metropolis afforded full scope for the exercise of that acute though contemplative spirit of observation which he subsequently displayed. He continued his studies at the University of Göttingen along with his brother Alexander. It was in 1788, while a student at Göttingen, that Humboldt, then in his 21st year, passed the *three important days* at the spa of Pyrmont with the correspondent of his maturer years—CHARLOTTE—(afterwards, it is said, Frau von Stein),—a young lady who, with her father, a clergyman in easy circumstances, was a passing guest at that watering-place. They lived at the same hotel, became interested in each other, rambled together about the neighbourhood, and, at the expiry of the three days, parted, not to meet again until both were in the autumn of life. The young student left a few lines in Charlotte's album,—a reminiscence which she treasured with secret regard, and which, twenty-six years later, she employed as a passport to that counsel and assistance which misfortune then compelled her to seek from her early friend.

After leaving Göttingen, Humboldt seems to have passed many years at Jena, where he enjoyed daily intercourse with Schiller, and commenced a friendship which was only severed by the death of the latter. Their correspondence was published by Humboldt in 1830, twenty-five years after Schiller's death. The critical cast of Humboldt's mind was

early pointed out to him by his friend in these interesting letters, which relate chiefly to the philosophy of poetry and art. "I am convinced," says Schiller, "that the principal cause which prevents your success as an author is the predominance of the reasoning over the creative faculties of your mind, whence arises the preventive influence of criticism over invention, which is always destructive of mental production. . . . In many respects I cannot call you a genius; yet I must allow that in other points you are one. For your mind is so peculiar that you are sometimes exactly the opposite of all who are conspicuous either through their reasoning faculties, their learning, or through abstract speculation. You will of course not attain perfection in the sphere of mental creation, but in the sphere of reasoning." The friendship that could admit of such valuable frankness must have exerted a powerful influence over Humboldt's mind. His interest in poetry, philosophy, and the fine arts, was no doubt greatly increased by this intimacy, which rendered Humboldt's natural taste for philology and the study of national literature far more valuable to the public than it would otherwise have been.

In 1800, Humboldt, who had some time previously married the Fraulein von Dacherode, a rich and noble lady whom he espoused from pure affection, was sent to Rome as ambassador from Prussia, and a few years later he was appointed minister-plenipotentiary at the Papal court. His residence there not only gave a new impulse to his love of antiquarian pursuits, but contributed to render him an accomplished statesman. On his return in 1808 he was created a Councillor of State, and appointed chief of the department for Public Instruction and Medical Institutions

in the home ministry. In this rank he was sent to Vienna as ambassador from his court in 1810, and afterwards as plenipotentiary to the peace congress at Prague in 1813, where, after long negotiations, Austria gave up her neutral position, and espoused the cause of Prussia and Russia. He had, however, in the interval, spent some time in complete retirement at Tegel, devoting his leisure to literature. He was present at the conferences of Chatillon, and signed the capitulation of Paris along with Hardenberg on the part of Prussia. He afterwards assisted at the congress of Vienna as representative of Prussia, and in 1815 signed the treaty of peace between Prussia and Saxony which deprived the King of Saxony of one half of his dominions. It was shortly before this, viz. in 1814, that the correspondence between Humboldt and his friend Madame von Stein commenced; but it was not until 1819, when he had retired from public affairs, that he could find leisure to write many private letters. In the mean time, in July 1816, he repaired to Frankfort as Prussian plenipotentiary, to undertake the delicate task of dividing Germany among its several princes. Soon afterwards the King appointed him a member of his council. He next went as Ambassador-Extraordinary to London, and afterwards, in October 1818, to Aix-la-Chapelle, to assist at the congress held there. In 1819 he was called into the Prussian Ministry, and made a privy-councillor. He had scarcely, however, entered upon his duties, when he felt obliged to resign, along with Beyme and Boyen, because he could not follow the course of Von Hardenberg, but, in opposition to him, felt it to be his duty to remind his sovereign of the solemn promise he had given in 1813 to the Prussian people, that they should receive a liberal con-

stitution in the form of a national parliament competent to legislate as well as to advise,—a promise never redeemed by the then monarch, and not yet entirely fulfilled by the present one. Humboldt thenceforward devoted himself to literature and science, living chiefly at his seat at Tegel, near Berlin; nor did he again take any part in the councils of state till 1830. This was a year after the death of his wife, to whom he was so sincerely and devotedly attached as to render all thoughts of a second union quite repugnant to him. Her loss evidently made a deep impression upon his mind, however independent of external circumstances he might endeavour to render himself, and it doubtless hastened the day of his own death.

So early as 1825 the French Academy of Belles Lettres had elected him a foreign member of their society. He seems to have enjoyed the friendship of Herder before his death in 1804, and to have been on intimate terms with Professor Ritter of Berlin, the celebrated reviver of geographical studies. He names with respect Madame de Staël and Madame de Laroche, whom he knew slightly in his youth. Chevalier Bunsen, still living, seems to have been early appreciated by this remarkable man, who was evidently a discriminating judge of character, and was ready to do full justice to the virtues of all. It will be noticed that he was partially acquainted with Gall, first at Vienna and afterwards at Paris, but not sufficiently so to have completely understood his system. Lavater's was preferred by Humboldt, probably because he understood him better. The short characteristic notices of Campe, Stolberg, and still more of the famous Schleiermacher, add considerably to the interest of the following letters.

The works of Humboldt, collected by his brother Alexander, and printed in 1841 in four volumes, are of a very miscellaneous character, and show the extraordinary versatility of his powers. Besides many critical and philological essays and treatises, embracing erudite researches into the Basque and Sanscrit languages, and several pieces in verse, published between 1799 and 1830, more than a hundred sonnets left at his death in manuscript have been printed in his collected works,—and yet these are only selections from his poetical pieces.

During the last ten years of his life his correspondence becomes most interesting. He was then principally occupied with the study of North-American and Malay languages, and at last exclusively with the Kawi language. In this he was assisted by Dr. Bushman, chief librarian of the Royal Library at Berlin, and to him did Humboldt commit the publication of his work “concerning the Kawi language in the island of Java,” along with an introduction relating “the difference in the structure of human languages, and its influence upon the spiritual development of the human race.” Humboldt bequeathed all his valuable and rare manuscripts and books, besides materials for a second volume on the literature of the Malays, to the Royal Library at Berlin.

Humboldt died on the 8th April 1835, at the age of 69. His character may be best gathered from the following letters. In them we have a sort of autobiography, revealing in a form never intended for publication, indeed *expressly private*, his deepest feelings and his profoundest thoughts. As the reader advances he will not only learn to know and to admire the author more and more, but will feel that he

grows more serious, more earnest, and even more original, till the very day of his death.

“The purpose of this correspondence”—we quote from the *Athenæum*—“is obvious throughout—to console, guide, and enliven, by advice and reflections at once elevating and serious. Of course, the person whom such a writer felt to be at once worthy of his regard and able to appreciate and profit by letters like these, must have proved herself superior to the common run of letter-writers or readers. Of hers we have but the first touching communication, and a few modest extracts to explain passages in answer. These are gracefully written and well expressed. Von Humboldt continually speaks of them with high commendation; praising their unaffected elegance and originality of thought, as well as their feminine and religious character. He found the impressions of youth confirmed by the renewed acquaintance of age, and seems to have taken a real pleasure in the correspondence for its own sake, independently of its purpose of doing good. That object, at all events, was happily fulfilled. The saddened and lonely woman, indeed, appears, we may almost say, to have lived on this support in the intervals of a laborious existence. All hopes of redress from Brunswick having proved vain, she had honourably resolved to maintain herself independent by the work of her own hands. Some kind of fancy manufacture, it would seem, procured her a moderate subsistence in a small garden-house near Cassel; and her leisure from this occupation was passed in solitude, with a few books and this correspondence with the object of her maiden love.

“It was preserved on both sides, equally by the wish of both parties, in unbroken privacy. Long after Von Hum-

boldt's death, no one had been allowed to see or even hear of the precious letters. 'They contained nothing,' says the survivor, 'that in itself *needed* to have been kept secret; the whole world might have known their contents:—but they were written to me; they were a sacred relic of my life; I preserved in silence, and hid from all other eyes—what had been written for myself alone,—had repaid me for many sacrifices and rewarded me for much suffering,—what was to me the kinder fortune of my life, that reconciled me to the harder conditions of my destiny.' Later, when the prospect of her own end became nearer, she felt that such letters ought not to be lost to the view of others who revered the memory of her friend. They were copied out by her own hand, and left to be published after she herself should be no more. This voice from the past now comes to us from the grave of both correspondents.

“The tenor of all written intercourse of an intimate kind continued to a life's end is progressively saddening. We see the cloud stealing by degrees over the narrowing horizon;—one after another, the possessions of life drop and wither on the downward path; and the glimpses of a future, that raise the hopes of the wanderers themselves and console them for the losses that befall them on their way, do not take away the sense of bereavement from those who are pursuing their steps with affectionate regard. In the present instance, the other circumstances which we have mentioned give a peculiar effect to this interest,—and will be felt to throw a touching colour over the relics of a correspondence in its nature unusual and almost romantic.

“Its substance is throughout of a grave and wholly intellectual character. There is no gossip—hardly any personal

notice of daily events—nothing sentimental or frivolous, in the letters. They are filled with reflections and ideas. The writer gives minute and careful details of the internal occupation of his mind upon many subjects,—chosen, we may see, because of their application to the circumstances of his friend. Throughout, we behold the character of Von Humboldt in an impressive light: in the first division of the series, when living, with every circumstance of prosperity and happiness, blest with a beloved and thoroughly companionable wife, a numerous and affectionate family, honoured at home and abroad,—even then finding his chief delight and employment in the pursuit of retired studies, in reflections on the past, and in the contemplation of ideas reaching beyond the sphere of time. With all this he is somewhat self-complacent—fond, in a kind, friendly way, of exerting influence and authority; but modest in his personal demands, simple in his habits, and, while thankful for his good fortune, by no means dependent upon it for his happiness. That this character was not merely a thing of pretence, we see from the second half of the series—after the loss of his wife had taken from him, as he repeatedly says, ‘all the joy of life.’ From this period we find him suddenly declining into the infirmities of age; but still cheerful—busy as ever with his mental pursuits—gladly helpful to others, and noticing the decay of his health and bodily powers with an observant, but not in the least complaining mind. He is not impatient to die, but quite ready to depart from a world from which his pleasure is gone,—grateful the while for all the good he can still enjoy—regarding old age as the final and becoming condition of humanity, but as one who feels that life here is the preface

to a more complete existence hereafter. Such, in general, are some of the chief characteristics of this correspondence,—in which, however, many other points will be found to deserve a reader's attention. He will be struck with the original views and forcible remarks that abound in it, and will admire the unaffected spiritual elevation of the writer all the more when he remembers that this lover of solitary thought, this worshipper of the moral and intellectual ideal as the chosen objects of his pursuit and love, was no thin recluse, a stranger to society or fallen out with it,—but a practised statesman as well as a renowned scholar, trained in the great world, in which his station and character still required him to act, where he enjoyed the highest reputation, and was always ready to take his place when a duty was to be performed, or a good to others to be procured by his exertions.”

* * It may be mentioned that the lady whose name appears on the title-page of these volumes as translator is not responsible for the larger portion of the first volume, which has been rendered by others.

INTRODUCTION.

THE letters herewith given to the world will doubtless be received as a welcome addition to the already published works of WILLIAM VON HUMBOLDT. A wish has often been expressed for the publication, in a separate form, of his unprinted works, especially his letters; altogether apart from his learned writings, and as not properly belonging to the same class as these. The following letters were written between the years 1814 and 1835. It was only after many years' hesitation that the Editor at last came to the resolution of imparting to others, through the medium of the press, what she had all along regarded as a sacred relic. She became at length convinced, that what was so essentially characteristic of a truly great man should not be allowed to perish.

What William von Humboldt was to the State in times of great excitement and historical importance—what he accomplished for the people and for mankind in general, with his lofty humanity and noble independence of mind—his investigations in science and

literature,—all these have become matter of history, and are written on imperishable tablets. But in the inexhaustible riches of thought, the depths of feeling, the multiplicity, elevation, and purity of the ideas in which the deceased lived, there shone conspicuous above all “the superior nature, the nobility and magnanimity of soul,” as his honoured brother expresses it, by which he was animated. How apt and powerful was the language in which he clothed his sentiments! And yet this, fine as it was, formed only the outer shell and husk of his great mind. There dwelt in the depths of his soul an entirely disinterested, strong, and self-denying will; to this were united that depth and earnestness of purpose which spring from truth—that power of conviction, amiable forbearance, charity in judging, and that all-embracing, infinite charm of a delicate sensibility.

All this is eminently conspicuous in these letters to a female friend, who left them behind her to be printed after her decease. Besides the light they throw on the character of the author, it is proper to acknowledge, in giving them publicity, that they attained another and a higher end:—the reception of each had a very beneficial effect. They were addressed to a friend forsaken by fortune; they were dictated by sympathy, and intended for her consolation; and they attained their end. They may yet have this effect on the readers for whom they have been selected. The minds of great men, and all that has come forth from them, certainly continue to influence posterity, even when they themselves have passed away.

These letters are not for every one,—as indeed may be said of all books. But inquiring readers of both

sexes will here find rich and varied instruction, and the subjects treated of will always command their attention and gratitude. They touch on outward life only as a connecting link from which to draw ideas. They proceed from an inexhaustible source of inward mental riches. The characteristic matter by which the whole is animated, and which is imperishable, can never be drawn from without.

The contents of these letters are not learned nor scientific; still less are they political or historical, æsthetic or romantic. If outward phenomena are dwelt on for a time, they quickly return again to that inward existence which despises all outward show. They compromise no one, and do not contain a word which is censurable, or which can be unpleasant to any one. They show how a great man expressed and proved his sympathy and friendship; how he analyzed and brought into harmony contending feelings; how he succeeded in the art of persuasion, and that often with the most touching modesty. It was thus, as many of these letters prove, this noble-minded man imparted comfort to others, and raising them above the evils of time and fate, led them to the same point of view from which he himself contemplated the life of man.

So much for the preliminary remarks from the hand of a friend. What follows is added in all truth and fidelity by the Editor herself; it is for her alone indeed to do so.

And in all truth and fidelity will I here add what is necessary in the way of explanation, but will first

of all subjoin to the foregoing what properly belongs to it.

This correspondence formed, for a long succession of years, my only, my highest, secret happiness. In all that befell me—whatever I experienced of sympathy and consolation, counsel and encouragement, elevation and serenity, and even of perception and recognition of important truths, I drew from this inexhaustible treasure, which was ever accessible, ever at my side.

Such a correspondence, which nothing disturbed or interrupted, leads to a closer knowledge of character on both sides. It cannot be called a secret, for the whole world might know the contents of it. But the letters were addressed to me, and were therefore regarded as the *sanctuary* of my life; I preserved in silence and in secret that which was written for me alone, which indemnified me for great privations, rewarded me for many sufferings, formed my sweetest earthly happiness, and quite reconciled me to the world and to my own fate.

I need scarcely mention that many of the letters are withheld—more indeed than the half—as touching on matters of too confidential a nature to admit of their being given to the world without a species of desecration. There are others, again, which in respect of beauty, and even of self-praise, are so characteristic, so charmingly expressive of the mind's inward riches, and of the fulness of the kindest and most upright heart, that they ought not to be withheld from those who will certainly cherish every remembrance of the kind. It is my desire that all the letters which appear here may be regarded as a double legacy, a double voice, from the invisible world;—first of all, to the

dear remaining relatives of the writer—next, to his numerous friends and admirers, in whose hearts his image can never be extinguished, consecrated as it is by love and reverence;—and they are also designed as a legacy to the narrow circle of the friends of the Editor, who has carefully collected, preserved, and conscientiously selected them. Those who had the happiness of being known to the deceased, and to whom he deigned to unfold the treasures of his mind, will recognise his hand in these letters, in the turn of the ideas, and in the frequent self-delineations contained in them.

There is much requiring explanation, in order to render them clearly intelligible; but this I am unwilling to give. What woman, honoured and blessed by the friendship and sympathy of William von Humboldt, favoured during so many years by such confidential letters, and in possession of such interesting writings, could have the courage to place her own views and thoughts beside those which flowed from his pen! It is more natural and becoming to allow him alone to speak. It will be clearly seen by the letters themselves, and it depends on them alone to show what ought to be the tendency of the correspondence.

A few words as to the origin of the correspondence may be interesting to the reader. I shall relate it shortly and simply.

It was in early youth, in the year 1788, that I, only a few years younger than he, first became acquainted with Herr von Humboldt. He had come from Göttingen, where he was studying, to Pyrmont, whither I had accompanied my father, who visited one of the spas every season. We lived in the same house,

sat next each other at the table d'hôte, and, along with my father, spent three of the happy days of youth as inseparable companions in our walks among the charming avenues and alleys of Pyrmont. We had so much to say to each other—so many views and opinions to impart—so many ideas to interchange,—we were never done. Whatever string was touched, and however slightly, it found the deepest response.

It was then the last epoch of a poetical time, full of beauty and hope and promise, when one part of the youth of the country lived in an ideal and inspired world, and the other was advancing as now in a prosaic realism. We both belonged to the first. And there still prevailed at that period the sweet calm before the approaching storm, which soon broke out so frightfully.

If in youth there is not yet a clear conception of the great and noble, still it is felt and anticipated. William von Humboldt's character was the same in early youth as it afterwards appeared and continued to the end of his life. Even in 1788 his ideas were clear and sublime; there was at that time the same peculiar unruffled repose shed over his whole being, which was conspicuous in his conversation, and made him so influential in society. Every word was convincing, and shed a flood of light on whatever subject he touched.

At the end of three days Herr von Humboldt departed. We remained longer. To me the remembrance of those three happy days of my youth outweighs in value all the rest of an ordinary everyday life. The memory of them has accompanied me throughout my whole life. My young friend had made an impression on me, hitherto unknown and never to be extinguished,

which, different from other feelings, concealed within myself and held sacred, ran like a mysterious thread through all my future destinies, and which I have always blest and regarded as the benign ordination of a gracious Providence. Neither wishes nor hopes nor disquietude were mingled with the remembrance of these three days, any more than with the days themselves. I felt myself infinitely and inwardly enriched, and my mind became more earnest than it had ever been before. We had talked over many things which still occupied me for a long time, and the love of the true, the good, and the beautiful, became clearer and stronger within me.

We did not see each other again, nor did I entertain the slightest hope of our ever meeting in future.* I enshrined the beautiful vision that had passed over me in the inner sanctuary of my mind, never brought it to light, nor even spoke of it, and thus secured it from the desecration of foreign contact.

The leaf of an album, more used as a keepsake at that time than now, formed a precious memorial to me throughout my whole life. I little thought how important it would become as a document hereto annexed,† and characteristic both of the young Humboldt and of our youthful intercourse.

I was married early in the year 1789, soon after having made this acquaintance, so important to me in after life. My marriage, which proved childless, lasted only five years, and I never entered into a second.

My destiny became unusually and painfully com-

* We did meet, however, twice, after many years.

† See the facsimile of the leaf of the album, opposite title-page.

plicated, and my whole life a tissue of reverses, owing to enigmatical and secret intrigues and enmities, only unveiled in the end; but which I had reason to bless, for to these alone could I impute the kind sympathy bestowed on me by my excellent friend.

At this time began the great movement, which involved more or less in its current the destinies of thousands who took no active part in it. It reached me also in its force, robbing me of a fortune sufficiently independent for my moderate desires, the possession of which had secured me against those struggles in life which I was afterwards fated to experience. In the eventful year 1806, I lived as a stranger in Brunswick. I had continued to reside there for a number of years under the mild reign of the aged and much-beloved and honoured Duke Charles William Ferdinand. The seizure of German property and the rule of the French began after the battle of Jena, of which such favourable results had been anticipated. The blow fell first on Brunswick. Violent as were the succeeding steps, they were regarded only as the usual incidents of war, but not as a prelude to those which followed. No foreign rule was thought of or dreaded.

A summons was now issued, that all must join willingly or unwillingly in bearing the general burden. On me, however, no demand was made; but freely and willingly I gave a great part of my fortune. A sum of money had just been paid to me, which had been formerly invested in bills of exchange, but of which I could immediately dispose. No one thought of danger, as the obligations were guaranteed by the States, and the money received by them. It was considered quite secure. I had met with severe domestic

afflictions at that time, and, occupied with these, I did not perhaps act prudently enough. What was the fate of these securities is well known, and needs no further mention here.

Then came those years so important in the world's history, 1812, 13, and 14. Of those who experienced them, who does not think with delight of the inspiration of those times, when every one forgot his own individual lot, if at all endurable! I still lived in Brunswick. No one had suffered more than the Duke himself;—and yet how his people clung to him with German fidelity and love! In a manner highly honourable to the good Prince, he became acquainted with my losses and consequent condition. As a stranger, he valued my loan higher than it deserved. Some of my friends acquainted him fully with all. This kindest of princes showed his sympathy for my losses by addressing two letters to me, and expressing a wish to render me some material service. I was advised to avail myself of his kindness and to beg for a pension. But I could not do so. I trusted to his princely word that he would himself take up my cause when affairs had come to a happy issue. I should certainly not have been disappointed in this confidence, had he not fallen at Waterloo.

Several influential men, filling high offices in the State, interested themselves on my behalf, in order to procure me some indemnification: but in vain. Severe and oppressive as my losses had been, they were never repaired.

About this time the newspapers spoke in the highest terms of the Minister von Humboldt, who after having been resident at the headquarters of the King of Prussia,

had been appointed his plenipotentiary at the Congress of Vienna. The thought suddenly occurred to me, to recall myself to the remembrance of one whom I had never forgotten; to explain to him openly and without reserve the condition in which I then was, and to leave it to his judgment to decide whether anything could be done for me. The thought no sooner arose in my mind than it was accomplished. Whilst I wrote, all my youthful feelings of confidence returned. I gave my dear friend the shortest possible survey of many eventful years, but dwelt longer on present circumstances as having given me courage to take this step. The much-valued album leaf formed an expressive testimony. I kept a copy of this letter, part of which I will here transcribe as explanatory, and as having been the occasion of opening the following correspondence.

I received an immediate answer, which will be read with lively interest by every one who was acquainted with the deceased, as being so truly expressive of his noble nature.

Before, however, proceeding to these valuable letters, it may be necessary to say something as to their publication, or rather the causes which led to it. This becomes a duty at a time when so many letters of a confidential nature are being given to the world, which, along with the interest they excite, must necessarily give pain to many, and also deserve just censure unless their authenticity were fully established.

The publication of these letters was brought about as it were by some invisible power. I had preserved silently, as a precious relic, my enviable treasure, and regarded it as an inexhaustible source, from which I drew for many years strength and courage, and attained

to the maturity of which I was capable, and could not otherwise have attained. I needed no other nourishment for my mind, no other book for my instruction, no clearer light for my soul. I there found in every situation the needful comfort and encouragement. My honoured friend adapted himself to my comprehension in the kindest manner, and was therefore intelligible, clear, and convincing, on whatever subject he touched. If we differed in many of our opinions, this difference arose from outward circumstances. But the friend of my heart was always the moving principle of my mental life; I lived on with him from one letter to the other, and was thus richly and inwardly rewarded for undermined health and a life of care and trouble. By becoming more retired in my habits, and narrowing the circle of my friends, I only followed my own secret inclinations; and my great pleasure and delight, unknown and unguessed at by any one, lay in this highly animating and inspiring correspondence, which was neither interrupted by journeyings nor sickness, but to which death alone put a period. It was an especial satisfaction to my kind and sympathetic friend that I thus held my treasure sacred during half a lifetime.

Greater leisure having been granted me during the latter years of my life, I was enabled to enter more deeply into the spirit which pervades one and all of these letters, and to sound the depths of the rich and highly-enlightened mind breathed forth in such elevated ideas! These letters were my sole companions for many long and lonely years.

Often, when absorbed with the remembrance of my late friend, and pondering over the memorials of so singular a connection, it seemed to me unjust that what

was so expressive of truth and greatness and goodness should perish with me. Undoubtedly they were written for me alone, and to suit my manner of thinking and experience; but the truths they contain are so convincing and so distinctly expressed, the certain way to inward peace and happiness is so clearly and mildly and undeniably pointed out, that they must meet with a salutary recognition in every well regulated mind.

And was all this to perish with me? with me to come to nought?

Here, then, was my first movement towards the preservation, in some manner or other, of this rich treasure.

I began to make extracts in manuscript to leave to my friends; but I was soon convinced how perishable such legacies are, and how carelessly they are sometimes read. Reasons presented themselves one after another for the preservation of these valuable papers through the press. But a great obstacle arose before me: my dislike to all publicity. What appeared to my friends highly honourable as regarded myself, was to me desecration. A second obstacle was the necessity of a thorough inspection, and even of re-writing, at least partially, the extracts already made. Difficulties arose on all sides. Thus, as has already been said, years passed before I resolved on publication; and even this not to take place till after my decease.

Time, which soon consigns to oblivion whatever is unimportant, brings to light all that is truly great, and will augment the high value of the gift which I leave behind me to those who can understand and estimate it aright, and who will certainly receive it with deep gratitude.

I regarded it as a sacred duty, after having formed the resolution, to make all the extracts myself, and to write them with my own hand. I thus secured truth and fidelity on the one hand, and on the other made no one else responsible. I cannot, however, answer for it that repetitions may not occur. I state this here, that I may not be obliged to repeat it in every individual case. I certainly require indulgence and forgiveness for the mistakes I have committed, and could not indeed avoid, as I was too late in resolving to publish, and neither asked nor admitted of help from others. If, after every care, repetitions do occur, the reader will have the goodness to pass over such parts. It is for the writer alone to awaken and keep up the interest; and if *I* am deserving of censure, what *he* has written will be a rich indemnification.

In accordance with my own wishes, none of my letters have been preserved—only a few copies and fragments to remind me of events which ought not to escape from my memory. These I shall add, when necessary, in the Appendix.

TO BARON VON HUMBOLDT,

PRUSSIAN STATE-MINISTER AT THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA.

It is not to your Excellency, not to the Prussian State-Minister, but to the never-to-be-forgotten friend of my youth, whose image I have cherished and revered for many years, but who never again heard of the young girl whom he once met, and with whom in his youth he passed three happy days, the memory of which is even yet animating and inspiring, that I now address myself. The name to which the world now looks with such high expectation, the position to which your mental endowments early raised you, rendered it easy for me to hear of you, and to accompany you in thought. I rejoiced in all the great and noble things I heard or read of you, participated in the truth and fidelity of the picture, and endeavoured as formerly to penetrate and follow, even when I could not quite comprehend the mind and spirit from which they proceeded. Such things may be *signified*, but cannot be expressed by words. To see you again, even at a distance, has ever been a vain wish. I have heard, however, more circumstantially from friends who were lately for some time in Berlin, what I knew already, that your Excellency is very happily married to an intellectual and excellent lady, and that you are the father of amiable and promising children.

I here enclose a small leaf, which will recall to your mind the three happy days we spent together in our

youth at Pymont. I have preserved this dear little leaf more carefully than all the other relics of my youth, as the only token and seal of the purest and at the same time the truest earthly joy fate has ever presented to me. This little leaf* (which I beg may be returned to me) will recall to your Excellency an acquaintance, the recollection of which the great scenes and events of life must long ago have extinguished. Such impressions are deeper and more indelible in the female mind, especially when, as with me (what hesitation ought I to experience in giving this proof of my regard after the lapse of twenty-six years!) the first unknown and unacknowledged emotions of awakening love were of a mental kind, as they must always be with the young who are of a noble nature. For the development of the female character, it is always of the highest importance in what manner the feelings are first awakened. And certainly there was nothing sad or painful connected with my first awakenings, which exercised the greatest influence on my mind and character.

Those feelings outlived time. The dear image, so deeply engraved on my mind, never faded. It rose ever higher and higher, and continued to be my ideal of manly worth and greatness. On it I reposed when ready to sink under the difficulties of life; by it I was animated when my courage failed; from it I received new faith, when faith in man was shaken. Believe me, ever-beloved friend!—pardon this warm epithet—I have been matured under many and severe sufferings, but never injured or degraded by unworthy feelings. Your

* The facsimile.

Excellency is still the same as you were when we first met;—that I feel within my own bosom. Exalted rank and the brilliancy of outward position may be shoals for many; but lofty natures attain to maturity and perfection whether in the sunshine of prosperity or in the dark shades of adversity. “The capacities of the heart, and the formation of the mind, are alike unchangeable, alike eternal.”

You will now desire to know something of my past life and experience. A long succession of years must be treated of, and yet much may be brought within the compass of a letter, which nevertheless presents no image to the mind, and will not be sufficient for you. It will therefore be my endeavour to point out to you, from external events, the depth and development of my internal life. However much I may endeavour after brevity, still it will fill several pages; and the selection and arrangement cannot but be painful, when one looks around over countries which are, as it were, bedewed with our tears. If, therefore, I am not so brief as respect for the person and the time of a Minister occupied with such important affairs demands, then let the friend of my youth intercede for me with him;—let your Excellency lay aside those sheets for an hour of remembrance.

Before we became acquainted, the season of my early youth glided along harmlessly in the quiet retirement of a cultivated and pleasant family circle in the country. In my dear parents I had seen nothing but uprightness and goodness, and a beautiful example of many virtues. A fortune more than sufficient for those simple times permitted them the enjoyment of many of the amenities of life, especially of domestic life;—the education of

their children was conformable to their fortune—careful above all things with regard to morals, for which I feel deeply grateful. Whilst my mother superintended household affairs with rare prudence and dignity, my father, being in a tolerably free and independent position, yielded to the bent of his inclinations, which led him back into the olden time, and to the study of the ancients. He lived in the classics, and was surrounded by classical works alone. Modern literature had no attractions for him; it left him quite unsatisfied. His society was also in harmony with this taste. From the conversation to which I silently listened, not always learned, but always grave and serious, I received perhaps earlier than others the foundation of my intellectual culture, and enjoyed also earlier than usual the good fortune of coming into contact with persons of importance, of being kindly treated by them, and honoured with their sympathy. In this way, and as far as my natural talents permitted, I was early led to reflect—and, more by listening than by instruction—more by contemplation than by talents and acquirements, I was led on in the way of improvement. The earnest direction which my mind thus took, even when a mere child, guarded me against many youthful follies and frivolities, but nourished at the same time—more at least than is consistent with happiness in life—a propensity towards the ideal. Very early, therefore, for it existed even in childhood, I formed to myself a high and inspiring image of friendship, which appeared to me the greatest, indeed the only earthly happiness. The first story which inspired me, and which I had read again and again, was that of the truly wonderful and beautiful disposition and conduct of Jonathan to-

wards the modest David. I collected all the examples from ancient and modern times—Richardson's *Clarissa* above all. Capable of any sacrifice, I believed myself born for this happiness alone, and desired no higher. At Pymont the conviction amounted to inspiration, and soon became the deep and continual source of many fatal sorrows and painful perplexities. Pardon this introduction, which I consider necessary to the proper understanding of what follows.

I now pass on to the painful and eventful past, and from thence to the crushing and oppressive present, as that which has given me the courage to take this step. It is already becoming easier to me, for since I began to write this, the feeling of confidence has returned which we formerly enjoyed in our interviews among the alleys of Pymont.

Here followed the shortest possible survey of the most important events of my life, amongst which those that had induced me to write—namely, the great losses I had sustained by the State—were the most prominent, and were fully authenticated. To this were added the plans formed for my relief; all of which were frustrated by the loss of my health, and a total failure and exhaustion of all the powers of life. These details are not required either as commentary or introduction to the following letters, of which they were the cause. The conclusion ran nearly thus:—“You have now before you an outline of my life during this long interval. Return in some measure my constant though unexpressed sympathy and interest! You know the heart of woman, and can tell better than I, that whatever

belongs to a once-beloved object, or makes him happy, must be interesting to us.

“ I now close these sheets without fear. In acquainting you with my affairs, and making this appeal to your heart, I know I am safe, happen what may. How anxiously do I look forward to the answer which I am sure to receive !”

H. OCTOBER 18, 1814.

LETTERS

OF

WILLIAM VON HUMBOLDT.

LETTERS OF W. VON HUMBOLDT.

LETTER I.

VIENNA, November 3, 1814.

I this morning received your letter of 18th October, and cannot express to you how much your remembrance has touched and gladdened me. I have always regarded our meeting at Pyrmont as a wonderful ordination of fate, and you are much mistaken if you think you passed over me like a mere fugitive youthful apparition. I thought of you very often, and inquired after you frequently, but always fruitlessly. I believed you were married, and fancied you surrounded by children, and moving in a circle where you had long since forgotten me, and that I alone had preserved the recollection of those youthful days. I now learn that life has been to you a very chequered scene. Had you written to me at the time your sufferings were at the height, perhaps my answers might have been of service to you. Believe me, dear Charlotte—(do not be offended at this familiar epithet, *since these letters will be read by none but ourselves*)—human beings cannot confide too much in each other. I learn now for the first time, and from yourself, that I made a deeper impression on you at that time than I had imagined. Those lines of my own, which I see again after such

a lapse of time, are like a voice from another world.* I am happy to say,—for it is true cause for happiness,—that I have no need to be ashamed of any feeling I entertained in my youth; and, believe me, I am quite as single-minded now as I was then. Every word of your letter has taken a deep hold on me; I place myself in your situation, and I thank you from my very heart that you have not lost faith in me, and that you consider me worthy of your confidence. Write to me then more at length, if you consider it worth the trouble, without ceremony and with perfect confidence, of all that I might perhaps have acquired a right to know, had I seen you again.—You are very wrong when you say that certain impressions are deeper and more lasting in the mind of woman. I could prove the contrary to you from your own letter. Are you willing to allow, for it can be no reproach—(twenty years have passed since the period of our acquaintance, and we shall probably never see each other again)—that I nearly disappeared from your memory, when I left you? At least you did not remind me of my promise to visit you again, the neglect of which has often greatly mortified me—I could still indeed point out the seat in the alley where it was made: but a feeling of youthful pedantry, which made me think it impossible I could delay for a week longer my return to Göttingen, prevented me. This is to me a certain proof that it was not intended we should meet again; and what grieves me most is, that I was not destined to impart any lasting joy to your life. Sad or painful feelings (of this be convinced) could have no connection with any intercourse held with me. I am open to no reproach of the kind. To what extent your fate has interested me, after such a disclosure, you may easily suppose. I have thought over it to-day in many ways; and I entreat of you to resign yourself for a time into my hands—to follow blindly my counsel—to believe one who has

* Referring to the enclosed leaf of the Album, 1788.—See the facsimile.

more experience of the world than you, and who knows well what is needful for one in your state of mind. Set aside at the same time all trifling considerations, be perfectly open and confidential with me, and you will thereby do me the greatest favour you possibly can. What is most needful for you in your present condition both of body and mind is repose. The anxiety and exertion necessary for your support undermine both. You were, as I well remember, strong and healthy, and you became so again latterly, as it appears. Remain only *one* year in repose, and take care of your health, and it will return again in spite of the storms you have encountered. This is at the same time the best advice as regards your other plans. Believe me, he who seeks in the time of need, finds with difficulty. If, on the contrary, one can only live for a time free from anxiety, circumstances arise of themselves. Time alone can show which of your plans is practicable, and also how I can further them. I consider it a duty to speak thus openly to you on the matter. Oh! how very wrong it would be of you to be offended with me!

The Duke's letters are very kind, and do honour to him; but he cannot, as you see from the letters of your friends, be the *first* to give assistance.* These things must therefore be left to time and fate to decide. Grant me then the favour of being permitted to assist you in the meantime: let me have the satisfaction of knowing that one year has passed over your head undisturbed by petty outward cares. Yes, dear Charlotte, let me earnestly entreat of you not to despise my offer! It would certainly be the falsest of all delicacy, and you may be assured that *no one but ourselves* shall know anything of it. I am not rich, but I know very well what I am doing, and can see from the tenor of your letter and its enclosures, that you have accustomed yourself to great simplicity in your manner of life, which increases

* This is explained in the following letters.

my esteem and respect for you. I herewith enclose a bill for your use, with the understanding that it is only meant for a few months. But do as I ask you, and write to me honestly and confidentially what you require,—including a visit to the baths. Trust me, I never do more than I am able, and you can return it to me if your condition and circumstances improve; but you must distinctly understand my plan, which is simply this, that you are to have a whole year before you, free from pecuniary cares, during which you may form your future plans calmly and without anxiety. I know right well what I am exposing myself to, after the description you have given of yourself. You may refuse all my offers, see nothing but presumption in them, and load me with reproaches. I must persevere, however, in my proposal, as being the only one suited to your condition. Never suppose, dear Charlotte, that I see anything unseemly in trying to live by the work of one's own hands. You shall be quite free in future. It is only till your health is restored that you must obey me. Every kind of labour is at present destructive to you. If you apply, notwithstanding, to others, no one will answer you so unobtrusively and unselfishly: others will think they are doing you a favour; I ask you to do me one. But enough of this: I will now speak of myself, as you request.—I married, as you already know, three years after I saw you, and have now five children; three I lost. Mine was entirely a marriage of inclination, and never perhaps was any man more fortunate in his connection than I have been. But for the last two years my wife's health has unfortunately become delicate, and my duties have often detained me far away from her, as is the case at present. You say you have often heard of me, and must therefore know that I was for several years ambassador at Rome. I accepted of the appointment entirely on account of the country, and would never have left it, but for the unfortunate events which occurred. It became to a certain extent my duty to give my services, and I have

therefore, from time to time, been placed in perplexing circumstances. But my situation is little suited to my inclinations, which lead me rather to a more simple and quiet manner of life. Throughout the war I was at headquarters; then in England; from thence I went to Switzerland to visit my wife, who had travelled thither. I am now at the Congress, and she at her own estate, from whence she goes to Berlin. After the Congress I intend visiting her there, and then to go as Ambassador to Paris, whither she will follow me some time after. My eldest son, who is already an officer, went at the age of sixteen into the field, where he received a wound; but he is now happily returned, quite recovered. Besides him I have three girls and a little boy. The two youngest girls have been brought up in Italy, and could not speak a syllable of German when they came to Vienna, the eldest in her tenth year. I wish you could see them;—they are two charming creatures; the little boy is just five years old. I had the misfortune to lose two sons at Rome, and a daughter who was born when my wife was on her way to Paris, and whom I never saw. You now know all that regards my outward condition;—of the inward, one may speak but not write.

Accept once more my hearty thanks. I know not whether I shall ever see you again, and can indeed scarcely entertain such a hope. I cannot now form to myself any distinct image of you. But if that which I bear in my heart is but a vision of the past, and one to which my imagination has largely added since our meeting, which was only of momentary duration, believe me it never was and never could be of a fugitive nature. Yours entirely, H.

I return the original documents and the keepsake.

LETTER II.

VIENNA, Dec. 18, 1814.

Your letter, dear Charlotte, has given me great pleasure, and I thank you heartily for it. You place too high a value on what was so natural, and could not indeed be otherwise. The recollection of you has never been effaced from my mind, nor ever can; but it did not occur to me to think that I should hear of you again, or that you could have any remembrance of me. All at once you recall to me the images of the past and of my youth by your kindness, and by your frank confession that were it not for the circumstances which separated us you might perhaps have felt more. I have answered you on the impulse of the moment, and with the pleasurable emotions you have awakened in me, and will continue so to do. Do not praise me for this, but continue your kindness and confidence; write to me as warmly and confidentially as you do now; be as open with me as I am with you, and never suppose that your letters can come too frequently, or be too circumstantial. There is nothing more delightful to a man than the implicit devotion of a female heart. I am very far indeed from making the smallest claim on you—I possess no such right. You can have but a very imperfect image of me in your mind. When I hold intercourse with you, I must shake myself loose from business and cares and distractions. But if you continue to write to me as you do now, telling me confidentially and without reserve all that concerns your outward and inward existence, in a manner corresponding with your early feelings towards me, I will receive it with the liveliest joy and gratitude. Write to me, therefore, I pray you, from time to time. You write extremely well, and

naturally besides; and I must confess I am so childish that even your handwriting gives me pleasure: it is pretty in itself, and I remember it of yore.* Tell me above all about yourself. Your last letter contains scarcely a word as to your health. Let me know whether you improve in strength, in appearance, and in cheerfulness. I have also a request to make of you,—never wait for an answer to write to me; be magnanimous, and do not expect letter for letter. I have very little time, and can write but seldom, and by snatches; give, then, and do not ask in return. Perhaps you will think I have no right to make such a bold demand. But I do not deny that I am selfish as regards you; and you have so high an opinion of me, that I confess I wish to bring it down a little.

You ask me, dear Charlotte, whether you should live in Göttingen or Brunswick, and say you will do nothing without my approbation. Now this is touching me on my weak side, for it is always very gratifying to me when any one follows my advice. I think, then, that you should go to Göttingen, and this not out of deference for you and because you prefer it, but because I like it better. You will think this very extraordinary, nor will you be able to guess my meaning;—even I cannot rightly explain it. But such is my wish, were it for no other reason than that I saw you when I lived at Göttingen, and often thought of you there, but did not know you when I was at Brunswick. Altogether, I like Göttingen, because I lived there in solitude at a time when solitude is improving. Greet the ramparts heartily for me. Write to me when you get there, and tell me all about the people.

And now, farewell, dear lady, and do not estrange yourself from me again. Ours is a most extraordinary tie. Two persons, who met only for three days, many years ago, and can scarcely hope to see each other again! But there are

* This could only be in an album leaf.

so few deep and pure joys of a like nature, I would be ashamed to withhold the confession that your image from that time even until now, has been connected in my mind with all the feelings of my youth, with the times, and also with a brighter and more simple state of things than the present, both as regards Germany and the whole world. I have, besides all this, a great love for the past, which alone is eternal and unchangeable like death, and yet at the same time warm and joy-giving like life. With these unchangeable sentiments, yours,

H.

LETTER III.

BURGÖRNER, April 1822.

It is very long since I have had any intelligence from you; and I am sorry, indeed it pains me much, that I am so entirely forgotten by you, of whom I so often think. Write to me, dear Charlotte, as soon as you receive these few lines, and tell me how you have been going on, and how it fares with you now? I have long meditated writing to you, and begging for some intelligence. Perhaps I myself am the cause of your silence. My short letters may have repelled you, or you may be apprehensive of becoming burdensome to me. Address your letters to Burgörner near Eisleben, where I am residing at one of the properties belonging to my wife. Farewell, and let me have an immediate answer.

H.

LETTER IV.

BURGÖRNER, April 1822.

I wrote a short letter to you a few days ago, dear Charlotte, and now dispatch a second. In the first place—because I long for a few lines from your own hand, and I am sorry I have been so long silent; then, also, that I may try another way to make it certain that my letter reaches you. I do not exactly know your address, nor do I even know whether you still live in * * * * . I venture, however, confidently to hope that you have not forgotten me.

Yours, H.

LETTER V.

BURGÖRNER, May 3, 1822.

I have received both your dear letters, dearest Charlotte, and write instantly, to return you my most hearty thanks. You have greatly delighted me by what you say, and quite answered all my expectations. I could never be mistaken in you, or lose faith in the constancy and fidelity of your sentiments and feelings. I have already told you this;—and it is only natural that it should be so. When any one has cherished for another, during so many years, and without having received a single token of remembrance, those deep feelings which bespeak a noble and tender nature, then it were the height of ingratitude to entertain any further doubts. It is certainly a rare happiness for a man when a woman cherishes for him the first sacred feelings of her youthful bosom, and I am certain that I estimate and prize this happiness in the manner it deserves. But I say without pride, to which I am certainly not addicted, but also without childish modesty, that I might be the medium of imparting to you much that would enrich and enliven and adorn your existence. When fate has laid up so much in store for two beings, it must not be allowed to fade away, but must on the contrary be brought into accordance with both exterior and interior relations, because refinement of feeling and peace of mind can be founded on this harmony alone. Since, then, no personal intercourse can take place between us, let us begin and carry on an epistolary one. I am not fond of writing, and must condemn myself in the outset, by saying that you will very often have to exercise patience and magnanimity towards me; but I am very fond of reading letters, especially yours, not only because I like to read what you write, but because I take the heartiest and

liveliest interest in all that concerns you. Should I therefore write seldomer, do not let that hinder you. Write to me always on the 15th of every month; then I shall at least have one day on which to rejoice. If you write to me in the interval, it will be an additional pleasure, and I shall always receive it with gratitude.

Your having made choice of a rural life has given me the greatest pleasure. It is expressively characteristic of your tastes, and combines solitude with cheerfulness. The former suits your character, your feelings, and your condition; the latter enlivens and embellishes your life. It pleases me much, therefore, to think of this your manner of life, and that you seldom go into the town. I know you cannot altogether avoid visits, nor would it be well to give up all society, especially as you tell me yours consists chiefly of old friends.

I quite understand your preference for * * * * * as a residence, which must be connected in your mind with many of the bright and joyous recollections of youth, if not altogether free from sad ones. The surrounding country is also beautiful, and there is more freedom in a great city, as you justly remark, for every one to live according to his inclinations; it also offers many enjoyments, and at a more moderate rate, than smaller towns. I quite approve, therefore, of your resolution to remain where you are. But above all things, in your country dwelling, take care of your health. You are too silent on that subject, and yet it is on your peace and health and happiness that mine depend. I have not approached you again with any of my own selfish views and wishes, even although I do entertain one wish, which I will impart to you in my next.

I must now conclude. For fourteen days I have not been at all well; suffering from a feverish cold, which is very troublesome to me, as I have not been sick for years. With the truest and most unalterable regard, yours, H.

LETTER VI.

BURGÖRNER, end of May 1822.

I must tell you to-day, first of all, dear Charlotte, that I am quite well again, so that you need not be uneasy.

Our correspondence goes on rather strangely. When it began, you expected to receive very few letters from me; and now I have to complain of your silence. You promised in your last letter to write to me regularly on the 15th of every month; but you cannot have done so, else your letter would have been long ago in my hands,—and I have not, either on the last post-day or on this, received a single line from you. This makes me fear that you may be unwell;—and then I think of many things that may have occurred to prevent you. Whatever may be the reason, I am constrained to tell you that I long much for a letter, and have read again and again those I have of yours, and always with thankful remembrance of the great and long-continued kindness of your sentiments towards me. This may be called vanity, and ascribed to a feeling of satisfaction at being flattered and admired; but it would be too severe a sentence, and certainly an unjust one as regards me, who have never been addicted to vanity. No one perhaps has ever judged of himself so impartially, or treated himself so unsparingly,—no one perhaps so coolly and exactly pointed out how much was to be deducted from the praises of others, or how much was censurable in what they passed over in silence. To a certain distrust of my own powers, and of the superiority sometimes attributed to me, I am chiefly indebted for my success in private as well as public life. I willingly confess that I have always laid especial value on the possession of those mental qualities most capable of making an impression

on the mind of woman. But I am not so foolish as to imagine that these are in any way peculiar to myself. When any one becomes convinced, however,—as he must be by such ingenuous and natural expressions as yours,—that he has made a deep and lasting impression, then a double feeling of satisfaction is experienced,—that of conscious merit, and of gratification at having been understood and appreciated by a penetrating and superior mind. I rejoice, therefore, exceedingly in the renewal of our correspondence, and flatter myself also that it may be beneficial to you—to me it cannot be otherwise. Your image has accompanied me throughout a whole lifetime, as I lately wrote to you; beaming on me and cheering me in every vicissitude. When you renewed our intercourse, I was in more embarrassing circumstances perhaps than I had ever been before. These are now changed, and I have long meditated writing to you. Our correspondence having consisted for so long a period only of detached letters, it cannot be otherwise than that many of our ideas must have appeared anomalous to each other, which might easily be explained by a more regular and tranquil interchange of thought.

You remind me, dear Charlotte, what a rich treasure is contained in the heart of woman, and you call on me to have confidence in you. Be fully assured, then, that I have unlimited confidence in you—in your truth, your fidelity, and your delicacy of feeling: how otherwise would I write to you in so open and unreserved a manner? Confide in me also as firmly. Be assured that what you say to me in confidence will be held by me as sacred and silent as the grave. Believe me when I tell you that I have the very best intentions towards you; that this has always been the case, and will continue to be so;—confide in me, then, even when you do not quite understand me. Resign into my hands all anxiety as to the preservation of our mutual good understanding, as well as for the removal of every disturb-

ing influence. I never press any of my opinions on any one, least of all on you. I have a settled conviction that you are in no danger of misunderstanding either me or any of my views,—on the contrary, I know, for you have often repeated it in the most flattering manner, that you are not only willing but glad to be “corrected” by me, as you kindly express yourself.

I am glad to think that you do not tell any one you receive letters from me. That we write to each other is of no consequence to the world in general; and what is in itself sacred must not be made common by us. 🍷

Farewell, and rely implicitly on the unchangeableness of my sentiments. Yours, H.

LETTER VII.

BURGÖRNER, 1822.

I have to-day, kind Charlotte, a request to make, a wish to express, the gratification of which will give me great pleasure, and be received with lively gratitude. It is this: that I might be favoured with an exact and connected history of your life, especially of the development and rare progress of your mental culture. Your former letters prompted and excited this desire, which those I am now receiving augment still more. This cannot be difficult to you, who have acquired such facility in writing. You write unusually well—with ease, fluency, and absence of affectation. Your command of language is quite extraordinary. This is no flattery on my part; but a fact which may be proved by every one of your letters.

If you are so kind as to enter into my wishes, then let it be done in the following manner:—Begin with the day and the year of your birth, in chronological order and with the greatest minuteness. Write from memory all that you are able to recall, but not from fancy. Go back to your childhood and youth, to your parents and grandparents, to your ancestry, if any account of them has been preserved. I should like you to speak in the third person. Give to places and people and to me also, when you get so far, other names, only you must keep the name of Charlotte yourself. I have this in common with Goethe,—a particular predilection for your name. But above all, speak of yourself as of a third party; praise and blame yourself as if you were dealing out praise and blame to another.

What I dread is that your feelings may be lacerated by a renewal of painful recollections, knowing as I well do

already, that you have had much to endure. But it will be a long time before you come to these. The days of childhood and youth are for the most part joyous and serene; certainly to you they were so, and I shall be glad to receive from you a picture of both. What you write shall be for *me alone*, and no other eye than mine shall rest on its pages. I look forward with anxiety to the answer containing your decision, and bid you kindly farewell. Yours, H.

LETTER VIII.

BURGÖRNER, 1822.

You must have received two letters from me by this time, dear Charlotte, although they still remain unanswered. Both were written with the view of dispelling your doubts. I hope I have succeeded in this; and I begin to-day by repeating what I said to you in my last letter, that whatever you impart to me on the subject of your past life must be entirely dictated by your own feelings. Let it be a retrospect of the past in the society of one who takes the deepest interest in you,—but be it understood in the outset, without tearing open wounds that have been with difficulty healed.

I thank you heartily for the sheets you have sent me as specimens. The beginning of the narrative is entirely to my satisfaction, only some parts I should have wished to have had more in detail. Do not be disturbed by any fear that you can be too diffuse, and never fancy you are dwelling too long on any point. We have both of us a long time to live yet, although you have longer than I. Your description of the parental dwelling, amiable child, is highly interesting to me; and you have again verified what I always told you, that you write extremely well, and make your recital in a graceful, simple, and natural manner. Go on as you have begun, and if at any time it becomes burdensome to you, or makes inroads on your time, just think of the pleasure you are imparting to me. Life is to a certain extent expanded and prolonged, when one has before him such speaking pictures of a time when he lived in very different places, and was bound by very different ties; and there is, after all, nothing so interesting to men as man.

We feel as if we could never see and hear enough. New ideas arise at the sight of every new countenance. When the descriptions given are very distinct and detailed, then forms arise, and move as it were before the mind, and we live on with them as if they had an actual existence. This propensity to take delight in human forms, to live on with them as if they were present with us, is in strict accordance with the most decided inclination towards solitude. But as soon as we must hold intercourse with men, or rather as soon as we take pleasure in doing so, we find so many calls on us for action and for the vindication of our own claims, that we become abstracted from the pure spirit of contemplation. But if, with an inclination to solitude, we yet must live among men, which sometimes cannot be avoided, then they pass before us like pictures to be contemplated, and we fix our attention on them and not on ourselves. What effect we have on them, and how we succeed in pleasing them, is very indifferent to us, if we only consider them in their own proper sphere. Then when we return again into actual solitude, we have many images around us; and if we are inclined towards mental occupations, or have them imposed on us, then ideal men arise in fancy out of the real, to whom the real only serve as a foundation on which to place the picture. All questions of morality, all the deeper meditations on life and its aims, on happiness and perfectibility, on a present and a future existence, possess a richer interest, and permit of a greater variety of applications, when one may try them, as it were, by so many individual human tests. For there lies deeply concealed within every man, however insignificant, another and quite different existence, which is higher and nobler even when he seems not to be in reality good for much, but still nobler when he is in himself estimable. We have only to accustom ourselves to study this double existence of man, and from a flimsy everyday life, we arrive at an incomparably higher and more en-

larged view of mankind in general. It is, indeed, properly speaking, this expansive view which puts the stamp on every great poet: to him alone belongs the power of freely and clearly depicting, or rather of bringing to light the causes of events which follow each other in succession, and which seem to be the result of accident alone. Something similar runs through history. In it human nature comes more clearly and prominently forward, than in the thousand-fold petty associations of the present. The addition of one interesting character to those already occupying our imagination is a gain for life; and states and times and countries are not infrequently connected in our minds with the individual. I have always, for example, had a decided liking to country clergymen, and a kind of romantic feeling towards their daughters. This was already the case with me before I saw you, but the feeling was greatly increased by our intercourse, although you still continue to be the only one who ever made an impression on me. I have ascribed a large share of all that is excellent in the German character to the daughters of country clergymen: deep, heart-felt sentiment—simplicity joined to high cultivation—the absence on all points of that unpleasant affected tone which prevails in distinguished circles. I have often spoken of this, and then afterwards laughed at myself for deducing such a fine theory from one example alone, seeing I have never been much acquainted with any other clergyman's daughter than yourself. But I had, as I have told you, a prepossession of the kind, which, whenever we met, quickly attracted me towards you. But you disappeared from me like a half-seen picture, and the work of fancy only remains;—therefore all you now tell me of your childhood, your youth, and your parental dwelling, will be especially interesting to me. I shall then be able to prove whether my presentiments were well or ill-founded, and shall find myself transported back into a world peopled by my youthful fancies. I now doubly regret that I did not visit you and your father

that autumn in which I first saw you. I was at Dusseldorf with Jacobi, and wished to go from thence to you; but he detained me too long, and I was obliged to hasten back to Göttingen. One has often in youth a rigid sense of duty. For the sake of another hour or two at college I neglected an opportunity, which never occurred again, of imprinting on my mind a lively image of your parental dwelling, of yourself, and everything connected with your manner of life.

I said in the beginning of this letter that you had not been circumstantial enough. Now you will laugh at this, as you seem to think you have gone over a strange medley of all sorts of things. But still it is so. What I mean is this, that your descriptions should be still more circumstantial and contain fuller traits of surrounding objects. You must reply with minuteness to the question I am now about to put to you, and that in one of your next letters, and on a separate sheet. What was your mother's personal appearance? That may easily be described, and still you have not yet done so. You must in the same manner describe all those who appear often or much in your narrative. Write, therefore, very particularly, whatever you remember of your mother's form and features. Then you have certainly not described minutely enough the interior of your father's house; its situation and locality; the surrounding objects, such as gardens and neighbouring houses; whether the country was pleasant — whether you looked out on green fields or had an extensive view; there is not a word of this in your narrative, and yet all these are most essential circumstances. Remedy this, I pray you, and give me such a description as may enable me to make a distinct sketch from it. You must gratify this wish of mine, otherwise everything becomes as a floating fancy, and even thoughts and feelings lose much in their extent and capacity.

You will think me very troublesome with my requests, but you have consented in the outset to fulfil them.

I am here alone, but will not remain long. Address, however, your next letter to this; it may probably find me here; but if not, it will be forwarded to Berlin, whither I am about to return. You remember well—Burgörner, near Hettstadt. Farewell, dearest Charlotte. With unchangeable regard, yours,

H.

LETTER IX.

TEGEL, July 10, 1822.

I think I have already requested you, when my letters are dated as above, to address yours to Berlin, where they are more certain to reach me. It was here I spent my childhood and a great part of my youth, and I love Tegel very much. The country is by far the prettiest round Berlin;—on one side, an extensive wood; on the other, hills covered with fine plantations, from which there is a view of an extensive lake, intersected by several islands. Surrounding the house, and almost all around, are tall trees, which were of very moderate size in my childhood, but have grown up with me. I am now occupied in building a new house, which is already half finished, and we intend removing our pictures and marble ornaments here,—after which it will be such a pleasant abode, that I shall seldom go into the city.

I received both your dear letters here, and heartily thank you for them. I did not immediately reply to the first, in which you beg me so earnestly to write to you instantly, because I knew you must have received one from me before then.

You have no reason to fear my blaming your love of solitude, or that I would wish to limit it. Your old paternal friend E., however, has been very kindly anxious on the subject, and in thinking over what would best promote your happiness, has come to the conclusion that a more social manner of life would be pleasanter for you. Now, I do not think so at all; but even if I did, my decision would still be in favour of solitude. It has always been my way (but I take no credit for it), not only with myself (for that might

pass) but also with others, to look much less to their happiness and their present enjoyment, than to what they are in themselves—to their peculiar bent and disposition of mind. Where there is a love of solitude, then the mind has already assumed an elevated character, and it becomes still more so when the taste is indulged in: but the same would come by degrees to be the result, even where there is no natural love of solitude, but where violence is done to nature by continuing in it. This is my theory in most cases.

I have been much pleased with your detailed account of the rivulet which flows past your house and garden, and the path alongside of it. It is these little particulars that give a distinct notion of the situation and appearance of a place. Will you kindly think of me, dear Charlotte, when you wander by the side of your rivulet?

I am much obliged to you for the treatise you sent me in reply to my question: it has interested me exceedingly; for although you say it was not originally intended for me, one part seems applicable to myself. I like to know the views entertained by any one at different times of life, not only on writings, but on general subjects, for with many striking points of similarity, they must yet be very various. Such opinions must contain much that is one-sided, and even unjust;—but then they are genuine and natural, and as such attractive, because we thus obtain glances of the individual himself; they are also in the highest degree instructive to those who take a different view themselves, who are accustomed to measure the value, the effect, and the operation of things by a general standard, and to judge of everything in connection with character, manner of thinking, education, and outward circumstances. We must always treat individual opinion with respect, even when we cannot agree with it.—What you say of myself is very amiable and kind,—and I must also be allowed to add my own testimony to its truth, for I am indeed quite incapable of

ever forgetting or giving up any one with whom I have been intimate;—on the contrary, my custom is to follow out every trace remaining of the past. All ties of this sort, yea even every accidental meeting, connect so many things together in one, and life is such a piece of fragment and patchwork, that we can never sufficiently strive to join the connecting links more and more firmly to each other. It is certainly by this means that those who are in such wise remembered, yet retain somewhat corresponding with the image which still lives in the mind. But even when it is otherwise (and I have met with instances of the sort in my life), and when such persons again cross my path, I still take delight in studying their character and their aims, but without manifesting any further interest in them. With you, however, the case is very different: you have faithfully cherished the remembrance of me for many long years, without receiving from me a single token of remembrance. You take delight in dwelling much with me in thought, and you never make any claim or demand on me that I do not willingly and joyfully accede to.

* * * * * *

You ask me again if you may keep my letters. Dear Charlotte, I have a great dislike to old letters, for even if they do not contain a single word which could in the smallest degree injure any human being, still I am a great enemy to the system of hoarding. A letter is a conversation between the absent and the present; its destiny is fleeting, and it should pass away like the sound of the voice;—the impression produced on the mind is intended to remain till it is strengthened or changed by a second and a third, and so on. But you lay so much value on the thing, and enforce your request with so much earnestness, that I cannot persist in my refusal. You may keep them, therefore, for the future. It is exceedingly kind and good of you to say that you find whatever you need contained in them. I never write a line I am not able and ready to defend; it is

not for me therefore to be uneasy as to the fate of my letters. This, therefore, was not my reason for begging you to burn my letters, but what I have told you above, that I have a dislike to the hoarding of letters in general. I have no taste for reading old letters myself;—I should have thought it more natural for the thoughts to be occupied with a beloved object, and that letters lost their vitality when not direct from the hand we love. With you it is different: so keep the letters from henceforth. It gives me pleasure to accede to any request of yours, for you so very seldom express one. Now farewell, dearest Charlotte, and let your thoughts dwell much with me, for mine often share your loneliness. Yours, H.

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You seem to be astonished that in the midst of so many distracting affairs I still take delight in occupying myself with matters of taste and sentiment, in which you are pleased to say I show liberality and tenderness, together with a large allowance for different dispositions of mind and ways of thinking. This arises probably from the fact that such is by nature the quality of my own mind, and that it has always been my practice not to allow myself to be engrossed by matters of business, but on the contrary have regarded them as subordinate, and treated them as a secondary consideration, in comparison with the higher and more real existence within. They are only so much the better performed, however, notwithstanding. All that concerns man as a human being, the feelings by which he is actuated and which groan and strive within him for utterance, have always possessed an engrossing interest for me. I began at first by seeking to know and govern myself, and no one can know himself better, or have more self-command, than I. I have always striven after two things: to be susceptible of all the pleasures of life, and yet to be entirely independent of those I could not procure for myself; to ask nothing from any one, to be independent even of fortune's favours, to

depend on no one but myself, and to have happiness in and through myself alone. I have attained both in a high degree. I have never been carried away by what are called the pleasures and enjoyments of life. The simplest thing gives me pleasure, if calculated to enliven and improve, or if it be in any respect congenial to my own disposition. Therefore no one is so thankful as I, because in reality few have so much cause for thankfulness. But no one perhaps has so few wants—and therein lies great part of my happiness; for every desire, when satisfied, is, properly speaking, only an alleviation of pain; and all the trouble thus expended must be deducted from pure and peaceful enjoyment.

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The capability of subjecting ourselves to the will of another, just because it is such, and that it is against our inclinations we are obliged so to subject ourselves, is what every one stands in need of, even man himself; and I would not be satisfied did I not know that I possessed it. Moreover by this power the mind is mellowed, and yet becomes at the same time, for as strange as it may appear, stronger, more independent, and worthier of freedom.

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No human lot, not even the happiest, is free from struggles and privations; for true happiness is only attained when by the government of the mind and feelings we become independent of all the vicissitudes of life.

LETTER X.

BURGÖRNER, July 1822.

I have received two very dear letters from you, one immediately after the other, dear Charlotte. They have given me the truest and liveliest pleasure;—I thank you for them from my very heart, and deeply feel the kindness and love you so constantly and ingenuously show towards me; and in spite of my conviction that you speak of me exactly as you think, but not as I am in reality, still it gives me pleasure, even although I must deduct much from your kind and liberal additions, and set them down as the consequence and proof of your own warmth of feeling.

Your recollections of Pymont have given me great pleasure; I also retain many—very many, from that time even until now. I still remember many of the conversations which passed between us. There existed at that time and in that country a difference of opinion on many subjects, such as on fiction and on the formation of character, which in those days were closely connected with each other. One party favoured Klopstock, Stolberg, and those poets and dramatic writers the tendency of whose works was less eccentric and exciting; the other was in favour of Goethe, Schiller (who at that time had published some of his first pieces, such as the *Robbers* and *Fiesco*), and everything that was lawless and eccentric. I was as yet quite undecided. You appeared to me to lean towards the former, for I remember well you did not like Schiller's pieces. All this has dwelt in my memory, and appears remarkable to me to this day, because since then, even in deeper and more important matters, a more decided change has taken place in what cannot be called a great lapse of time, than could in those

days have been predicted. It is therefore particularly agreeable to me, dear Charlotte, that in the continuation of the history of your life you should dwell much and long on the period of your youth. I also wish to know more particularly what were the books by means of which you so early arrived at such a high state of cultivation and tone of mind, and how and by what these have been so strengthened and confirmed in later years. I repeat again, you cannot dwell long enough on all these particulars.

I am not quite at one with you in what you say as to treating every one according to his character. I always do so,—partly because it is the easiest way of attaining one's end; also because it is not my province to influence the minds of men against their will; and finally, because they are thus made happier and more tranquil, and it is natural to desire to see happiness and tranquillity prevailing around us. But as for myself, I always wish and do all in my power to prevent others from adapting themselves to my character. For what is that but coming to the conclusion that the character is confirmed and unchangeable, and thereby strengthening it in all its points? Now, as no human character is free from faults, this is just the way to perpetuate those faults. I know well that I have often been deeply wounded by being treated contrary to my nature and disposition; but such inward mortifications are always wholesome,—and true happiness does not depend on freedom from pain. Just in proportion as those who are on confidential terms with me give me to understand that they accustom themselves to steady endurance and self-denial, and do not murmur at wholesome sufferings, I treat them accordingly; and thus I may often appear to show least forbearance towards those with whom I am most intimately connected.

I am sorry to observe, by some of your expressions, that you have been suffering from illness, and fear you may perhaps not yet be recovered. Take care of yourself, dear, good

Charlotte—take care of yourself for my sake, and consider how deeply it grieves me to know you are suffering. Women are more fortunate and yet more unfortunate than men in this respect, that the greater part of their occupations are of such a nature that they can at the same time think of quite different things. I call this fortunate, for one can thus almost the whole day long pursue a train of deep thought with no interruption to work or loss of any kind. This is without doubt one of the chief reasons why women excel men in everything which leads to deeper and more subtile knowledge of ourselves and others. But when, on the other hand, these thoughts are not of a happy nature, or at least not in a pure and unmixed degree, but partly depressing and disquieting, then the danger is certainly greater and more destructive of inward peace; whereas men, in their business-itself, and even against their will, find abstraction and relief from inward troubles and vexations.

Never imagine for an instant that your decided predilection for the lonely stillness you have, as it were, created around you, could be displeasing to me: quite the contrary. The drawing of your country-house and garden, contained in your last letter, has pleased me much; for we like to be able to picture to ourselves everything connected with those we love. It is a matter of no consequence what you tell me as to E.'s fears lest you should become one-sided by living in such seclusion. There is nothing at all to be apprehended for you on this score;—on the contrary, one may become dumb in great measure, without being inwardly impoverished, or becoming insensible to the true, the good, and the beautiful.

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Retirement expands all the deep and tender powers that lie in the mind of woman, purifies her soul, and weans her from those petty disquieting views of things, on which women are more apt to wreck themselves than men. Once convince a woman, who loves to live in solitude, that she

need seek for no other pleasures than those she may draw from the depths of her own being, and this is the chief requisite for pleasing a man of even deeper and better regulated feelings than her own, and of exciting an unceasing and enduring interest.

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There are very few who understand the value of solitude, and how many advantages it offers, especially to a woman. If married and surrounded by children, then her family circle forms her solitude; but in the opposite case, solitude becomes absolute, and the loneliness in which one lives is seldom interrupted by the sight of man.

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Happiness passes away, leaving hardly a single trace behind, and can often indeed scarcely be called happiness, seeing nothing lasting has been gained by it. Unhappiness also passes away (and that is a great consolation), but leaves deep traces behind, and, if we know how to improve them, most wholesome ones, purifying and strengthening, and frequently productive of the highest happiness. Then in life it is worthy of peculiar remark, that when we are not too solicitous as to happiness or the want of it, but devote ourselves to the strict and unsparing fulfilment of duty, then happiness comes of itself,—yea, even arises from a life of troubles and anxieties and privations. I have often seen this verified in the case of women who were very unfortunate in their conjugal relations, but who would rather have perished than dreamt of forsaking their duty. Farewell.—Yours, H.

LETTER XI.

BERLIN, Dec. 2, 1822.

I have received your letter, dear Charlotte, and thank you for it with my whole heart. It is one of the greatest pleasures of my life to receive intelligence from you, and the greater the proofs therein contained of the warmth and truth of your attachment, so much the deeper is the impression made on me by every line you trace. The remembrance of the past is thus added to the enjoyment of the present, and I consider it one of the most fortunate circumstances of my life that you have preserved the remembrance of me, and that, since fate has now brought us nearer to each other, you still continue to value my sympathy, to enter into my views, and to look upon it as fortunate, yea even to impute it to me as a merit, that I still cherish sentiments which can only cease with my life. Such praise might well make me proud, only I have no inclination that way. I know my own faults and weaknesses better than any one else, and hold that it cannot be called a merit, when one has once been favoured by fortune to behold all that is truly excellent and pure, and to feel that such a rare gift has been in reality presented to him, that he should keep it closely locked in the depths of his soul, and never again suffer it to be torn away from him. Just such a gift of fortune do I consider my first meeting with you,—and now also the continuance of your faithful attachment, the pleasure you take in being guided by me, and your kindness in permitting me to write to you in so confidential a manner. I have received from nature what I hold to be one of her most beneficent gifts, a disposition fearless of misfortune; and even when I have sometimes been called

upon to meet it in some of its severest forms, I have only regarded it as a grave but not an inimical companion. On the other hand, I have gratefully enjoyed happiness as an infinite treasure; I mean pure happiness properly so called; that which is sent us by the gods, independent of any merit of ours, and without the smallest appearance of agency on the part of man. Of such a nature was my happiness in meeting with you, for I have now an image of you ever present with me, which can in nowise disturb or destroy my peace. For even if it were possible that anything could occur from which I should be obliged to dissent, still that image would remain pure and inviolate within me: such a contingency, to which every human being is exposed, would not be interwoven with the features which compose the outline of the image;—for every one, however good, must sometimes be untrue to his better self, and we must attach ourselves to this inner and less changeable, and not to the changeable and every-day self, must go back from the one to the other, and pardon many things of which that higher and nobler self is innocent. I could certainly never have anticipated what a treasure of love and fidelity you have proved to me throughout a lifetime. How could it do otherwise than bless me! The more I become acquainted, from the narrative of your life, with the associations which surrounded you in your youth, the more I fancy myself present among them—the more varied and lively are the features of the scene which hovers before me, and on which my imagination delights to dwell. I consider such enjoyments of the fancy to be among the highest within the reach of man, and in many respects I prefer them to those which are real. The latter are always exposed to disturbing influences; but the former, being only perceptible to the mind's eye, are among the purest and most elevating that have ever been vouchsafed to man. In these to live is true enjoyment, true happiness, and that of a nature into which no mixture of sadness can ever enter. But there are few,

strictly speaking, whose tastes are so directed; for the first requisite is a love of contemplation, which we look for in vain among those addicted to the pleasures of sense, and whose nature is ever leading them to the pursuit of the sensual. I have been, throughout my whole life, entirely free from such desires, and have therefore had all the more enjoyment in the study of things external as well as internal, and have been able to distinguish the true from the false in both cases, without being carried away by delusions of any kind.

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You asked me a long time ago, dear Charlotte, to give you some account of my own family; you now gently recur to the subject, and renew your request in such a kind and earnest manner, that I quite reproach myself for my tardiness. You say that the near relatives of beloved objects are to women infinitely dear and sacred; that the children are regarded as part of his existence; and that on the companion of his life and the mother of his children is bestowed a depth of tenderness in proportion as she is the means of promoting his happiness. Knowing well how to estimate the noble source from which such expressions spring, I thank you for them with all my heart. I have delayed complying with your request from one letter to another, only because I generally reached the last word of a page, and had exhausted my last leisure moment before I arrived at the subject.—I shall begin with my wife, as I do not exactly recollect whether you know who she is. If I tell you anything, therefore, with which you are already acquainted, do not be displeased with me on that account. She was a Fräulein von Dacheröden,—very beautiful in her youth; and although she has had eight children, her constitution is much sounder than those of many women who have been less tried. She has been delicate for some time, but not so as to cause uneasiness, or disturb her natural cheerfulness. Burgörner is one of her properties; Tegel

and those in Silesia belong to me. Our marriage was one of mutual inclination, and arranged without interference on the part of parents and relatives. We have now been married for thirty-one years, and she has never known a moment of dissatisfaction: our happiness is as complete now as at the first, although it has by degrees assumed that colour which lapse of time never fails to impart. Both being by nature lively, our connection has preserved more of a youthful character than might otherwise have been the case. My affairs often kept us separate from each other, but since I have enjoyed free leisure, we have lived together without interruption, to ensure a continuance of which is my chief motive for wishing not to enter service again, if I can possibly avoid it. After my marriage I lived free from official employment for more than ten years, during which I travelled to France and Spain with my wife. I now scarcely ever put my foot within the streets of the city, and even seldom drive. We either take walks together in the country, or both remain at home. Of our eight children we have, alas! lost three—one in Paris, and two in Rome while I was ambassador there. We have now three daughters and two sons remaining. Our eldest daughter does not wish to marry, but prefers remaining with us; and we should certainly be very unwilling to part with her after she has been so long with us. Both my other daughters are married. The second married before she was fifteen, and her husband was engaged in the war. He is now Lieutenant-colonel von Hedemann, and they live very happily together. The youngest is married to the Privy-councillor von Bülow, who was with me in London as Secretary of Legation, but is now here in the Foreign Department. She has one daughter, who will soon be a year old, and is also very happy in her domestic relations. My youngest son is still at home and is educated under my own eye. The eldest is a cavalry officer in Breslau, and is married to a beautiful and amiable woman; but alas! she has as yet no children. You now know, at least on the

whole, as much as may enable you to picture to yourself my family, and my manner of life among them. I see very few people beyond my own circle, and seldom go anywhere, except to visit some old acquaintance.

I must conclude, for my paper is exhausted. Farewell, dear Charlotte. With the most unchangeable and warmest attachment, yours,

H.

LETTER XII.

BERLIN, Dec. 27, 1822.

I sit down with the greatest delight to reply to your two letters, both of which are very dear to me, as is indeed everything which comes from you. I am sorry my unusually long silence should have caused you a moment's uneasiness, although to this circumstance I am indebted for another letter from you. You must never be uneasy, however, when I am at any time longer of writing than you think I meant to be. I am so seldom sick, that this can never be taken into account; and as for any change in my sentiments, of however slight a nature, that is indeed impossible. Such a thing is contrary to my character in general, and still more contrary to the sentiments I have always entertained towards you; and in a word, cannot happen. That I sometimes write seldomer, however, arises from quite accidental causes, over which I have no control. Although I have now no business properly so called, yet I am more occupied than most men who are loaded with business; and I by no means live, as many others do, in a manner which permits of the indulgence of my own pleasures and fancies. My time is regularly occupied from morning till night: excepting during dinner, I spend only about two hours in the evening with my family, and never go to bed before one. I scarcely ever go into society, but pass the greater part of my life in my own room, surrounded with books and papers. Since I left the service, I have led entirely the life of a student, and have undertaken extensive scientific inquiries;—hence it arises that there is sometimes a cessation in my correspondence,—less so, however, with you than with any one else. Indeed I am often astonished at myself that I write so

often to you, and at such length; and then again it seems so natural, because I can indulge myself by imparting my thoughts to you without reserve, and this calls forth letters from you in reply, such as I take delight in reading, however long they may be. For I have always time for reading, which neither requires the same resolution as writing, nor makes so great a demand on our time. One can think also at any time, but cannot always be in a humour for writing, and I could not lay such a restraint on myself. I condemned myself in the outset, dear Charlotte, by telling you that I was a very irregular correspondent, and you see now that I only spoke the truth.

I am glad you are pleased with the short account I gave you of my family, although you add—"If I may be permitted to express a wish that your account had been more circumstantial, still I rejoice in having been made somewhat acquainted with those dear to you, and am content." That is spoken quite like yourself; but in according all due praise on this point, I must chide you at the same time for the anxiety you manifest lest you should have gone too far in the expression of your feelings. Your autobiography is written for me alone. You have honestly and ingenuously revealed to me everything connected with the first sensations of your youthful heart; you have cherished the same feelings for me with unwearied constancy throughout a whole lifetime, and held the remembrance of me sacred, without receiving the smallest token from me. You had nothing of mine but a few lines on a small scrap of paper. This is surely enough to touch the heart of any man. All who know, as I may venture to say I do, how to estimate such rare happiness, must certainly regard it as an additional gift from Heaven. No reproach, however slight, or with the smallest appearance of justice, could fall on you, nor could any judgment, however cold or severe, find anything here to censure. You will see by all this that I am determined nothing shall ever again wrest from me that which

you have yourself voluntarily bestowed. No trifling scruple on your part shall ever rob me of my cherished possession. If I err, my heart at least does not err. I have never imbibed the narrow-minded notions with regard to feelings of duty which are current among many. Where there is inward purity, no feeling interferes with another—no duty is violated; at least I know such to be my own case, though I cannot answer for the consciences of others; and I have therefore always yielded without solicitude and without disguise to every genuine feeling which arose within me. So you see I am resolved, as I have already said, to keep what I have got.

Had it not been your express desire that I should give you some account of my domestic life, which seemed indeed very natural on your part, I would rather have been silent on everything connected with such intimate ties, and the feelings arising therefrom in a family circle.

But I must again repeat, dear Charlotte, that it is my *desire* you should not wish to recall a single word of what you have written to me, for your feelings are so clearly and faithfully mirrored therein, that I am gladdened by the remembrance. I wish above all things that your correspondence with me should bring to you nothing but pure and untroubled joy. I have no other end in view as regards myself, than to perpetuate those recollections which will ever be dear to me, and at the same time thereby to impart pleasure to you.

You must not be surprised that I was so long of giving you the information you desired;—I only gave it because you wished it. It has never been my custom to speak to one person of the feelings I entertain towards another;—on the contrary, it is quite opposed to my principles. I know well it is generally regarded as a token and a necessary accompaniment of friendship, mutually to impart every joy and sorrow,—to withhold nothing indeed, but to live in each other, as it is called. But my heart might be depressed with sorrow

or elated with joy, without my feeling any necessity to impart it even to those who are dearest to me. Indeed I never do so, unless other reasons call for a disclosure. I attach but little importance to the events of life;—happiness or unhappiness, so far as I myself am concerned (God knows it is otherwise in relation to others), form the last motives which influence my thoughts and actions. Thank God, with those whom I love like yourself, I can always find far better subjects for conversation than the passing events of the day. I act in the same way towards my wife and children. They know nothing at all of the greater part of my affairs, and my wife is so entirely of my opinion on this subject, that if she accidentally hears anything she did not know before, or of which I myself have occasion to speak, it never occurs to her to see anything strange in it. Friendship and love demand the fullest and most entire trust; but magnanimous souls stand in no need of confidence. Farewell. With unchangeable regard, yours,
H.

LETTER XIII.

BERLIN, Feb. 14, 1823.

You are quite silent, dear Charlotte: it is unusually long since I last received a line from you. For these eight days past I have wished to write and entreat you to break this silence, but I delayed, in the hope that every post-day would have brought me a letter. What if you were ill! but then I thought, surely you would have written, were it only to say thus much. But you were much agitated;—you had greatly exerted yourself: combined with this, there is the cold weather which now prevails;—all this may indeed have injured your health. I earnestly beg you to write and inform me how you are. I shall indeed be very uneasy if I still receive no letter from you.

I am quite well, but very busy. My brother has been with me for four weeks, but has now returned to Paris. During his stay, everything was laid aside, and I have therefore such an accumulation of business before me, that it will be some weeks before I can bring up all my arrears. Pardon, therefore, the shortness of this. Since you like to have long letters from me, my last must certainly have pleased you, for it filled the whole sheet, which is a great deal, when the handwriting is so small as mine. Farewell, and write immediately, I pray you.—With heartfelt and unchangeable regard, yours,
H.

LETTER XIV.

BERLIN, March 14, 1823.

I have received your letters and their enclosures, dear Charlotte, and most heartily do I thank you for them. No one could have arranged in a more orderly manner than you have done, this second part of the narrative of your life. You call them introductory numbers, which will be quite explained in the sequel, as all your thoughts are distinguished by clearness. It may be read as easily and with as little effort as a book; and your plan of dividing the whole into parts, each comprising a distinct and connected section, is particularly judicious, and gives greater facility in deciphering manuscript. I think it will be better, therefore, that you should not in future, as I at first proposed, confine yourself to any particular period of time, but give to each part a section suitable to its contents, so that it may neither be too short nor too long, and then send off each part when you have it ready, without giving yourself any trouble about the contents being confined to one particular period of time. I know, on the one hand, that you take sufficient interest in the thing, and are so kindly desirous of pleasing me, that you willingly enter into my wishes; and you may thus be induced to employ much of your leisure time on this work which you might well devote to other necessary objects. On the other hand, I would never wish so to occupy your time as to withdraw yourself from duties that it is incumbent upon you to perform, which would have the effect of making greater demands on you for exertion, in order to make up for lost time. In everything I propose to you, my desire is to add to your pleasure and satisfaction, never to impose any burden on you, or cause you uneasiness.

I am alarmed, however, to find by what you have sent, that your narrative is already so far advanced. This will convince you, as I have always said, that your fears lest, entering so minutely into detail, you should never be able to accomplish your undertaking, were perfectly groundless. Whilst at the same time I cannot complain of any want of copiousness, I willingly believe—indeed the narrative itself convinces me—that nothing further presented itself to your memory on the subjects of which you treat. You have overlooked nothing; all the persons you mention are so fully delineated, and with such vivid touches, that one feels as if well acquainted with them; and no breach is made in the picture by the omission of a single trait. Your two grandmothers are interesting characters. I am much inclined to trace a resemblance between you and them;—they were certainly most superior women. It is quite natural to suppose that such a simple manner of life should offer nothing more in the way of variety of incident worthy of delineation; I therefore quite understand how it did not occur to you before to look so far back into the past. Your having now done so, kind Charlotte, shows me that you take great pleasure in gratifying me,—and I am truly grateful. It is just because of the simplicity of such a life that your narrative has so great a charm for me, corresponding as it does with my own particular tastes and feelings,—a charm of which I have been more than ever conscious on reading these pages. I must also be permitted to praise this part more than the preceding, because the narrative proceeds in a more easy uninterrupted manner, and in a peculiarly pictorial strain. For, much as I liked to read the remarks you formerly interspersed in your narrative, still the great charm ought to consist solely in what is narrated, and in presenting to the eye a moving picture of scenes and events long since gone by, without any interruption on the part of the narrator. In the present case, you are in your own person

both the narrator and the subject of the narrative; but the difference of time is so great, and so worthy of notice, that even when carrying on the relation, you must feel towards yourself, as represented in these long bypast times, to a certain extent as a stranger. You must not, however, conclude that I am altogether averse to the introduction of such remarks, for that is not at all my meaning. I would rather applaud the style you have adopted in this part, than censure any other you might have seen fit to make use of, and to which you would doubtless have imparted a charm peculiarly your own. But it is reasonable to conclude that a narrative must be more distinct and attractive in proportion as the narrator keeps himself more in the background;—and he loses nothing by it, for we see himself and his individuality quite as clearly and expressively by the style and spirit of the narrative, and feel surprised by the concealed manner in which this comes to light.

I was much pleased with the drawings you inclosed; they give a reality to the scenes and the persons treated of, and thus contribute to the liveliness of the descriptions and the vividness of the pictures. There is something cheerful and agreeable about the outward aspect of your parental dwelling. On the occasion of your mother's death you mention, that although it was so dark that nothing could be distinctly discerned, there was yet something spirit-like around. I beg of you not to overlook this. If it be your intention, as it appears to me, to return to this subject in the sequel, then I am content, and shall prefer reading the detailed account of this circumstance at whatever part you consider the most suitable. If you do not mean to return to it, however, but intend to rest satisfied with what you have already said, then I must beg of you to devote to this subject an especial supplement in the second part, to complete it before going on with anything else, and to send it to me singly. This subject possesses a more than ordinary interest for me.

The disaster about your present dwelling has much annoyed me: you were so comfortable and retired there, and had, besides, arranged it so much to your entire satisfaction, that to be now obliged to leave it must be in the highest degree vexatious; and you have not only my heartiest sympathy, but I quite understand your state of dejection.

It is very grateful to me to know that you feel comforted by my sympathy, and that you like to dwell and repose on the remembrance of me when in trouble, as you now are, dear Charlotte. It has always been my wish and desire to exercise a happy and wholesome influence on you, and it rejoices me exceedingly to know I have attained it. Permit me, then, now to exert this influence on your mind,—now when you are suffering and bowed down by sorrow. Raise yourself, then, by me; for there is no one whose supporter I should so much wish to become. Farewell, then, for to-day, and allow me, in conclusion, again to beg of you to be comforted. Hold fast your faith in the constancy of my sympathy, and in the fidelity with which I am ever yours,

H.

LETTER XV.

BERLIN, March 30, 1823.

Your letter of the 19th of this month has grieved me, dear Charlotte, for it was evidently written when you were suffering under great dejection of mind. I was glad, however, to see that towards the end it became livelier in its strain, because it is a sure sign that the repose of writing, and the enjoyment of quiet converse with one who you feel assured ever takes an unceasing interest in you, had exerted a beneficial influence. I therefore hope you will not adhere to your intention of keeping silence, but will continue to write as formerly. That resolution, which I hold to have been only a passing one, must have been made in a moment of despondency. It is very amiable of you not to wish to annoy and distress me by your depression. But am I the less conscious of it because of your silence, or must I not on the contrary be made still more uneasy by being ignorant of its kind, colour, and degree? You may rest assured that I always take the heartiest and most sympathetic interest in you and all that happens to you, and that I in like manner regard as a misfortune your being obliged to give up a loved abode endeared to you also by the power of habit. Still I would wish you to show more firmness in a case like this, dear Charlotte—more cheerfulness and serenity, as an opposing power to outward misfortunes, especially as you are in possession of so many inward enjoyments. In saying this, I do not mean to throw the slightest or most distant reproach on you, for I would rather do anything than cause you the slightest pain. But it has always been my way to exercise the utmost candour towards those with whom I

am on confidential terms; to tell them, without reserve, what I do not approve of, and to point out the means by which, according to my judgment, they may attain to a greater degree of firmness and self-reliance, and become less dependent on outward circumstances. Do not therefore be displeased at what I now say to you, and may say hereafter. Do not look upon it as the easy talk of one who is himself in a fortunate and flourishing position, and secure against similar misfortunes. Trials and reverses arise independently of outward causes, and Heaven has dealt out these to man so wisely, that those who are to outward appearance most conspicuously favoured by fortune, are not yet on that account for one moment freer from causes of inward pain. During a tolerably long life, and one certainly not spent in circumstances free from difficulty, many things have happened to me which have changed for a longer or shorter period everything connected with my accustomed course of life, touching me in the very tenderest points by thrusting me into circumstances in many respects repugnant to me. I am therefore in nowise a stranger to the feelings you now experience, but am every day exposed to like vicissitudes from the hand of fate. Neither do I misunderstand the nature of your feelings, because, as you justly remark, I cannot sympathize with the outward cause. The change of an abode would certainly have little influence on me, for I have often been obliged to change mine from the most agreeable to the least desirable. I live indeed entirely in my own room, and have not been out, for example, for the last eight days, in spite of the fine weather, nor gone farther than into the next room to join my family at the regularly appointed hours. I feel no wants of the kind: every room is the same to me; and I need no conveniences except the cane chair on which I sit and the table at which I write;—you would find neither mirror nor sofa, nor anything of the sort near me. But it is not the cause of grief, but the grief itself, with which we have to do; and I only tell you,

in order to meet any objection that could be advanced or thought of, that as regards a disaster such as has now befallen you, I could not place myself in your situation. I can certainly do so in as far as every one who is of an excitable nature, and not devoid of feeling, must be subject to depressing sensations of a similar kind; but it is just on this account that, profiting by my own experience, I must earnestly beg of you, dear Charlotte, not to allow yourself to be so entirely bowed down by this circumstance. According to your own account, I cannot look upon your having to leave your present abode as such a grievous calamity, as that you have not been able to find another equally free and open with a garden attached to it, combining the advantages of quiet and seclusion, with the absence of all fear of intrusion. I was much alarmed by what you formerly told me as to the coldness of your present residence, and the dampness of the walls, even those of your sleeping apartment, which must be anything but conducive to your comfort. But, in spite of all that may be said on the matter, till you can meet with another quiet country dwelling, the loss you have sustained is a very great one, and can in no wise be argued away. But, dear Charlotte, besides being called upon to bear with resignation that which is inevitable, you have still many inward enjoyments of which nothing can deprive you:—the recollection of all that is dear to you, the society of a small congenial circle, the consciousness of having maintained purity of heart and mind throughout a chequered existence, the satisfaction of being independent through your own exertions; in fine, what I may be allowed to add with pride, since you have so often told me so yourself, your intercourse with me, and the certainty that I heartily sympathize in all your joys and griefs. Men stand in need of a certain degree of firmness in all the various circumstances in which they are placed, even in those which seem the most fortunate; and then when, perhaps to prove and try us, misfortunes arise such as you now experience,

if we can only hold fast our resolution in the hour of trial, serenity soon returns to the mind by means of this very firmness itself, and the satisfaction which always springs from having been able to act conformably to duty.

I often think, dear Charlotte, of what is on the whole exceedingly likely, that I may be very different in many respects from what you suppose; it cannot indeed be otherwise with those who have scarcely ever seen each other and never lived together. I wrote to you in the beginning of our correspondence, that you must take me as I am, for I could not alter my natural character nor appear in different colours. My sentiments in general, and towards you in particular, have always been the same, and will continue to be so. I cannot answer for it, however, that the expression of these is equally interesting and gladdening to you at all times. I can allow of no limitation in my freedom of writing, either as to frequency or manner, and must therefore beg for indulgence when I accidentally disagree with you or your remarks. That I take a true interest in you, and feel pleasure in writing to you, must be evident enough if you recall what I told you from the first with my usual candour, that I did not like writing, and that my letters would be few and short;—and yet in reality I write a great deal, and sometimes very long letters, as this can testify.

To return to the narrative of your life. I can only repeat that its continuance will give me very great pleasure; but I must also add, that in my request I proceed on the supposition, not only that you do it willingly, for that I know already, but also that you take time and inclination into account, and only occupy yourself with it when both permit; for I know well how conscientiously you employ your time, and what your opinions are on this subject, and you are aware how much you have gained in my estimation on that account. What you have said to me on the subject of spiritual apparitions has made me still more curious;

and I am quite of the same opinion as your late father. No one can understand the secret connection of things, and I cannot admit of scepticism.

Now farewell, dearest Charlotte! Strive after greater serenity, were it only from love to me; for trust me, no one thinks of you so often or with so much pleasure as I do.—Yours,

H.

LETTER XVI.

BERLIN, April 12, 1823.

I have to thank you, which I do very heartily, for the few lines you sent me, prompted as they were by your own kind feelings. You say, "Do not interpret so literally words proceeding from an oppressed heart, nor yet that despondency which is the effect of a sad destiny." These words have deeply moved me. Never shall you experience the slightest change in my sentiments towards you. I look forward to your next letter with great longing. From some of your expressions I am induced to conclude that a more agreeable prospect is opening before you.

H.

LETTER XVII.

BERLIN, April 25, 1823.

I was just about to sit down, dear Charlotte, to answer your letter of the 9th of this month, when to my great joy I received yours of the 20th, for I had concluded you were waiting for an answer from me before writing again. I rejoice much to know that you are no longer in the same house with those unpleasant inhabitants whom you justly regard with so great a dislike. In your new establishment you have gained something at least in the way of repose and seclusion. The friend who came to you solely for the purpose of counselling you to quit that dwelling, even if you had not another to go to, has done you a great service for the next year of your life; and a year is a great space of time, when one is obliged to spend it in a situation exposed to constant annoyance. Still I would rather you had taken your present dwelling only for the summer, for it could not have been very repugnant to you to spend the winter in town. The description you have given me not only of the lower but even of the higher apartments is such, that it will be difficult for you to pass the winter there, at least without undertaking very extensive improvements,—such as new ovens, repairing the walls, windows, and doors,—which the place does not properly admit of, and which, besides, could not be accomplished without expense. I understand perfectly well, at the same time, your dislike to a town life. Were it not for my children, on whose account I am obliged sometimes to be in town, especially in winter, I would always remain in the country. Even where the neighbourhood is not in itself inviting, still it is something to have a view of the free expanse of heaven. There is to me an infinite charm in the

contemplation of the heavens in every variety of aspect,—in the clear star-light as well as in dark nights, in the soft blue sky as well as in the gathering clouds, or in the melancholy grey in which the eye loses itself without being able to distinguish anything. Every one of these conditions corresponds with a particular disposition in man ; and when we are fortunate enough not to be obliged to take our tone from the elements, not to be gloomy when the skies are dark, but, when gazing on the heavens, to become sunk in contemplations ever new and ever changing, springing from the clear and pure depths within, then the colourless sky can never, to say the least, be displeasing to us, although we naturally take more delight in it when soft and mild and radiant. It is quite foreign to my nature to make complaints about the weather, nor could I ever endure to hear others do so. I love to look upon nature as a great power capable of imparting the purest joy to those who live on tranquilly with her in all her developments, and who consider the sum of all these as one great whole, in regard to which the question is not whether every individual part is pleasing, if only the great general ends are accomplished. For me the peculiar charm of life in the country, and in the society of nature, consists in watching the different seasons of the year as they roll away before my eyes. It is just the same with life ; and it has always appeared to me, therefore, an idle question, to say the least of it, what period of life offers the greatest attractions to man,—whether youth or manhood, or any other given portion of time. It is nothing but self-deception when any one imagines that he would in reality desire a continuance of one particular period. The great charm of youth just consists in cheerful and unconstrained anticipations of life ; and all these would disappear whenever it became apparent to any one that he was doomed to be always striving, but never advancing a step further ; somewhat like the unfortunate people who are condemned to work at the treadmill. It is just the same with age : when

the conceptions are clear and powerful, it is nothing else, in truth, than *a looking beyond this life*, an ever-increasing conviction that we must leave all things and yet be able to dispense with them, loving meanwhile and looking with cheerfulness on all we are leaving, as a scene in which we are interested, and on which our thoughts still love to linger. Even when we do not mingle religious thoughts with the contemplation of the heavens, still there is something so indescribably stirring and solemnizing in losing ourselves in the infinitude of space, that all the petty cares and desires of this life, and all mere realities, are in this manner deprived of their otherwise undue importance. For, true as it is that man is the first and most important consideration to man, still there is nothing which so much tends mutually to circumscribe and repress the natural energies, as when, closely crowded together, they see only with each other's eyes. We must first of all habituate ourselves to recognise and feel in nature a power still higher and greater, ruling over man, before we can estimate aright their circumscribed views and aims. This is the only way, besides, by which we learn not to place an undue importance on mere realities, and also become more independent of happiness, and less dejected by sufferings and privations, and are thus enabled to direct our attention to the frame of mind within, to that total revolution of heart and disposition to which all mere outward circumstances must become in a great degree subservient. Thus attuned, there is nothing unusually afflicting or repulsive in the thought of death: on the contrary, the mind takes pleasure in dwelling on it, and looks upon the departure from this life, whatever may follow thereupon, as a natural stage of development in the order of existence.

I have been led into this train of thought, partly from having just been reading the supplement to the second part of your narrative (for which I am truly grateful to you), the contents of which are closely connected with this subject. It is very difficult to determine how far we may be per-

mitted to go in judging of facts, for we must regard as such what we have ourselves experienced.

It is scarcely possible to conceive that a beloved person should be invested with the power of appearing to the outward eye either at the moment of departure or afterwards, but yet the human mind has experiences within itself, which would lead to the supposition that it is possible to penetrate such things, though only through a veil darkly. Any one who knows what it is to experience a longing, must be conscious that it has the power of attaining a degree of strength capable of breaking through the usual limits of nature. A certain susceptibility towards the perception of spiritual appearances may, however, be necessary on the part of those who are said to have seen them, and we may often be surrounded by spirits, without knowing or dreaming of such a thing. The reason why fewer spirits are seen now than formerly, and less is heard of visions, may be easily explained. Among the stories of former times, many certainly were either false—not exactly invented, but suffered to remain without inquiry,—or they were natural, though misunderstood, phenomena. There was then more faith generally, and more also in such things. Men were more addicted to fear of the supernatural; the opinion that there was an evil spirit which had the power of torturing and seducing, was then received in a more literal and positive sense. It may, however, for all that, be quite correct that many of these accounts are true, and that there were actual supernatural appearances such as the one seen by you; and if that be the case, then the explanation is certainly very difficult, especially when an effect of the kind you describe is observed by several persons at a time, and those of very various character, as was the case in your house; for the sight of apparitions and countenances of individuals would have admitted of an easier explanation. I have already said that a certain susceptibility belongs to the perception of the supernatural. Now people may

have possessed more of this in those days, because they lived in a condition less exposed to worldly distractions; they had more piety and earnestness and concentration of thought, and their minds were more directed towards a state of existence beyond this earthly world. This may very probably have been the case with such an excellent man as your father, and one of so deeply religious a character and tone of mind. However that may be, he has taken up the cause in an excellent spirit, free alike from fear on the one hand, and incredulity on the other. The account has interested me in a manner quite unusual; I thank you heartily for it, and I look upon your having so soon gratified my wish in this matter, and that at a time also when you were much disturbed and annoyed by your change of habitation, as a new proof of your kindness and readiness to oblige me.

As the weather continues so raw, I am still in town with my family, and intend going, in the first place, only as far as Tegel, my little country place near this; afterwards, probably to Ottmachau in Silesia, for six or eight weeks. Farewell, and be sure you take care not to expose yourself in your new abode to the influence of the air, which is still very unlike the season of the year.—Yours,

H.

LETTER XVIII.

TEGEL, May 15, 1823.

I now write to you, dear Charlotte, from my little country place, of which I have already given you an account. I have been here for some days with my family, but the weather is still very unfavourable for us. We have either constant storms of wind and rain, or the heavens are covered over with clouds. The latter I like very well in summer. When the clouds are light, covering over the bright blue sky, only (as it were) with a delicate veil, the wind hushed at the same time, and the air warm, then there is a degree of melancholy in the picture, very pleasing to one who is in a like frame of mind. There is very little appearance of green yet;—the oaks in the woods are just beginning to burst; and it is only the earliest trees, such as chestnuts, elder-trees, and the like, that are as yet decked in full foliage. On the other hand, the blossom on the fruit trees is very rich and beautiful. I fancy you every day enjoying all this in your own garden, and am only afraid that the wind and the bad weather may have interrupted your walks and been troublesome to you, for you have already told me that your dwelling is far from being well sheltered. Owing to my brother having been in Berlin, and a succession of other less important circumstances, I have spent the whole winter in town, without having been able to make even a short stay here; I therefore enjoy the country doubly, everything possessing as it were the charm of novelty. It seems somewhat strange that solitude and the open face of nature should have such peculiar charms for me, as such a preference cannot be attributed to my manner of life. When one has been accustomed to live always in the

country, or has been deprived of the enjoyment of it for a very long time, a preference of this sort admits of an easy solution in both cases: in the latter, novelty supplies the place of habit. But neither of the two has been the case with me;—I have neither been entirely deprived of the pleasures of the country and of solitude, not even for several years at a time, nor have I enjoyed so much of both as that they should have become to me like a second nature. During the many years when I was without employment of any kind, I either travelled or was in society of some sort. I had no estate of my own, but lived by my own free choice in small towns,—a choice which was influenced, however, by other considerations. When I became engaged in public affairs, I was drawn into mixing in many large circles widely removed from anything resembling the solitude of the country; but still I found means to isolate myself, and was often alone even in the midst of society. This art is very easily acquired, if one has only an absorbing interest sufficient to occupy the whole soul. I have always regarded it as one of the greatest benefits Heaven has mingled with my lot,—for which I never can be sufficiently thankful, and feel it indeed more and more every day,—that, however, it may have been with me formerly, I am now at my age placed in circumstances in which I am free to indulge my own favourite inclination. Most persons impute it to philosophy on my part, and to my being of an unassuming character, that when the time arrived for me to retire from active life, I did so not only with equanimity at the moment, but have ever since lived happily and contentedly in the midst of constant occupation, without showing the least desire to resume a public station, but, on the contrary, the evident absence of any appearance of even the most secret longing after it. I do not assume to myself the smallest merit on this score, because I know that I deserve none. My conduct was in conformity with my inclinations, the turn and tendency of which may be traced to the fun-

damental principles of my character, and it is therefore no wonder that these should be lasting. Moreover, I am certain they will never become weaker. According to my ideas, there can be nothing more repulsive than the thought of being occupied to the very close of life with concerns which must all come to nought at the moment of death, and of which we can carry nothing with us beyond. And yet all active occupations come under this denomination. It is quite the reverse, however, with those which belong to thought and knowledge; for even when the latter is traced out in detail, it will still in the end be found to be closely connected with thoughts and ideas which, when properly followed out, cease to have their central point in this world.

Whatever we acquire and bring to perfection of this nature is faithfully preserved and carried about with us as long generally as life endures. It has always appeared impossible to me, that that which has once thought and felt within me, should ever cease to think and to perceive. Even if intervals of imperfect consciousness take place, if the different stages of existence should not be united by connecting remembrances, still an idea that has once obtained entrance does not on that account operate the less powerfully on the character and on the mind's inward capacities. It is quite otherwise when we are engaged in occupations wholly connected with outward circumstances and the actual business of life, and that not the result of our own free choice, nor from any particular predilection, but from quite different views, and merely as a trade. I have gone on in this way pursuing occupations of the kind without trouble, and could have continued to do so as long as my powers would have admitted of it. Women are particularly fortunate in this respect, that the labours to which they devote themselves are chiefly of a mechanical kind, if not always entirely so, requiring very little exercise of the head, and none at all of the perceptive faculties, thus per-

mitting them to resign themselves to the consideration of the better and nobler and more enduring part of man, to a much greater extent than is possible to the other sex. Hence it arises that men are so apt to become one-sided, dry, and dull, owing to the nature of their occupations, which is never the case with women, even when forced by outward circumstances and reverses to make a trade of their work, and after having been in their early youth very far from any thought of being driven to such a necessity.

In my present situation, however, there is one thing which is not quite so pleasant to me, but which cannot well be avoided,—the having to change my abode several times in the same year. I very easily become accustomed to a new place, but still I prefer remaining in the old, and there is something especially attractive to me in watching on the same spot the varieties of the seasons as they pass in regular succession; for even the very regularity of these changes possesses a charm for me which I have often endeavoured in vain to explain to myself. You will say, that with the full and perfect freedom I enjoy, I could easily regulate my manner of life here also according to my own wishes. But there are always, even for those who are most free, circumstances which must to a certain extent be yielded to, and which determine the line of conduct; and this is the case with me also. In like manner, during this year, I shall not be able to remain here beyond the first of June, and then I must go into Silesia, where I may be obliged to remain for more than two months, and then I shall probably return here again. I am sorry, since you prefer my being there to all other places, that I shall either not be able to go at all to Burgörner this season, or only at most for a short time.—I now bid you kindly farewell, and beg you will pardon me for saying so much about myself in this letter. I speak to you as if it were to myself, and you know how agreeable it is to me when you do likewise. With the most affectionate attachment, yours,

H.

LETTER XIX.

TEGEL, May 26, 1823.

Our letters have crossed each other, dear Charlotte, for I had written to you without waiting till I should receive a letter from you, and you have sent off yours sooner than usual. You will have seen by my last that I am just about to set out on my journey, and I shall therefore only say a few words to you to-day. I see by your letter that you are in suffering, which I greatly and deeply deplore; and you also complain of evils that are more than ever grievous and burdensome to you. Much of this must doubtless be ascribed to your change of abode, and to the disquiet and solicitude caused by the trouble of having to look out for a new one. I flatter myself, however, with the hope that all this will pass away when you get more accustomed to the new neighbourhood and its associations, and when, with the advancing season, you will be able to have the enjoyment of spending more of your time in the open air. In this view I was greatly rejoiced to find by your letter, that even at the time you wrote, you were becoming much more reconciled to the garden, which may now be called your own. Nevertheless I always dread to look forward to the winter; for when the health is so feeble as yours, alas! seems always to be, the chief point is to have a house with very thick walls, and sufficiently secure in every way against changes of temperature. Now this does not appear to be at all the case with yours, according to your own description. I beg you will consult with some one who is skilful in such matters, before the dangerous season of winter arrives, and when he has pronounced his opinion, then follow his advice, whatever it may be. It would certainly be a great evil if

you were obliged again to change your abode, but not so great as putting your health in jeopardy. I beg you will follow my advice, dear Charlotte, to which I must be allowed to add another request: Take care of yourself, for repose is more essential to you than anything else, after so much exertion and fatigue.

* * * * *

I was much pleased with the part in your letter about the festival of Whitsuntide, so expressive is it of the deepest necessities of your nature. I also prefer it to all our other great festivals. There is something at once consoling and elevating in its holy signification of the descent of godly power on human beings, and yet not beyond the power of our minds to conceive, seeing we can perfectly well understand how the divine and the human may be mingled in the same mind. Humanly speaking, however, it is a very delightful festival, because it concludes the winter in a peculiarly appropriate manner, and we begin then to look forward to the bright days of summer.

What you say about pain and suffering I very well understand,—namely, that you have not yet attained to the point of being independent of fortune and its vicissitudes, and especially of pain. It has often appeared to me that you do not possess the power of enduring suffering with firmness,—which is perhaps the sign of a feminine nature of peculiar softness; and as it would be both unjust and useless, I will not attempt to harden your nature, but will rather wish—which I do most fervently—that pain, adversity, and every species of sorrow, may ever remain far from you; to which end I shall ever with pleasure and willingness do all that I can to contribute. But with our sex the case must be very different. When a man allows suffering to obtain the mastery over him—when he anxiously shuns it on all occasions, and is constantly complaining of what is unavoidable,—then he becomes an object of contempt rather than of compassion. But there must be a vast dif-

ference between men and women in many respects. It is quite becoming and natural in a woman to cling to another for support. A man must doubtless also possess the same power; but when it becomes a necessity of his nature, then it must certainly be viewed either as a defect or a weakness. A man should always strive to be sufficient to himself, and in all respects independent.

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The question you put to me, whether I have ever known what it is to be in real suffering, is a very natural one. Rest assured, that I always avoid speaking of what I have not known and fully tested by my own experience.

* * * * *

I have not yet exactly fixed the day of my departure, but, at all events, it is so near, that a letter from you will not find me here. I must therefore beg of you to write to me according to the directions I lately gave. Meantime, wishing from my very heart that all may go well with you, and that your health may soon improve, I beg again to assure you of my heartiest sympathy and attachment.

* * * * *

Happiness and unhappiness lose much of their true value when they are allowed to pass out of the sphere of inward sensibility. Just as reality is, in its effect, always miserable and limited, so also is the charm of every agreeable feeling lessened when it is clothed in words. Such feelings must dwell, increase, and if of a transitory nature, decline and perish in the heart in which they originated. It is just the same with unhappiness. The pain which is confined within our own bosom has something sweet in it, with which we could wish never to part, if it be preserved and held sacred there.

* * * * *

I cannot receive consolation from any other person than myself. If I did not possess sufficient firmness to enable me to be my own comforter, such a consciousness would be

much more unpleasant to me than anything I could be called on to endure, were I to become the sport of an adverse fortune. It is natural to conclude, however, that the case may be otherwise with women; but when it is so with men, we regard them as anything but praiseworthy. A man must be sufficient to himself.

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Pity is a most repugnant sentiment, and sympathy, without doubt, a very delightful one,—but only when of a certain kind.

* * * * * *

That you take so deep an interest in everything that concerns my welfare, has infinite value in my eyes; but to have actual experience of this sympathy, to stand in any measure in need of it, I could not reckon to be among the most desirable of feelings. Altogether the idea of *need* is extremely repugnant to me;—but I only speak for myself and of my own feelings. I have hitherto always striven to be in need of nothing I was not myself able to supply. It is perhaps impossible ever entirely to attain such a consummation; but if it could be reached, we should then, and not till then, become capable of the highest friendship and the most exalted love; capable at the same time of bestowing as well as of enjoying it, and that in the most perfect, pure, and unselfish manner. For the idea of *need* always suggests a certain mixture of the corporeal with the spiritual, and whatever belongs to necessity takes away from true enjoyment. The satisfaction of a want is merely the redress of a grievance, and therefore always of a negative nature; but true pleasure, physical as well as intellectual, must always be something positive. For example, he who stands least in need of friendship, has the fullest and most perfect appreciation of that which is vouchsafed him; to him it is productive of pure and unmixed enjoyment, an accession to that which is already contained within the depths of his being, and by which he is inwardly blessed; and when in turn he comes to

bestow friendship on others, he does so in its most beautiful form; for there is no admixture of self in what he bestows—all consideration is concentrated on those on whom it is bestowed. The more confidently and firmly two beings are each rooted in themselves—the more entirely they are at one with themselves and their own lot,—just so much the more secure is their union—so much the more lasting and satisfying to both. But should one of the two be deficient in this security, there still remains a sufficiency in the more perfect firmness of the other. The popular opinion that love and friendship need reciprocal support, is unsubstantial, and applicable only to a second-rate class of persons, both as to sentiment and feeling; for in such a case both may easily be deprived of all security when neither is in possession of any guarantee against the weakness of the other. You must understand, however, that when I speak in this way, it is masculine independence of mind I allude to, which I hold to be in reality the first requisite for the formation of a character of real manly worth. The man who suffers himself to be deceived and carried away by his own weakness may be a very amiable person in other respects, but he cannot be called a man,—only a sort of intermediate thing between the two sexes. Such persons ought not to find favour in the eyes of woman (although this is far from being always the case); for a truly beautiful and purely feminine nature should be attracted only by what is highest and noblest in the character of man.

LETTER XX.

OTTMACHAU, July 12, 1823.

* * * The estate upon which I now reside—which I have once before mentioned—came into my possession in the year 1820. It is most charmingly situated. The old castle stands upon a hill, from which the eye commands a view of the Silesian, Bohemian, and Moravian mountains. Between these there are hills, at the base of which the River Neisse flows. The most beautiful fields, meadows, and thickets, are interspersed amongst the mountains;—and these also form part of my possessions. It is true I do not reside in the castle, for the interior is not completed;—a few of the apartments only are habitable, and these are occupied by my children; but a little lower down the hill there is a most comfortable and excellent house, which, to a great extent, enjoys the same prospect,—and this serves as my place of abode.

* * * * *

It is perfectly true that my lot in life is a very happy one; and your remark is just, “that this is more to be attributed to good fortune than to any active exertion on my part.” This is indeed true, and it renders my happiness—if I may be permitted so to express myself—still happier. A gift bestowed by fortune is far dearer to me than one obtained by my own merit. He who is favoured by fortune appears to have sufficient worth and importance to induce fate to heap her gifts upon him. I have been fortunate also in many transactions of my life, the happiness arising from which cannot be so readily recognised as external prosperity;—indeed I may assert, that up to the present time, fortune has favoured all my undertakings. Many

affairs, both of a public and private nature, by no means wisely conceived, have not been followed by those evil consequences which they might so easily have produced; and others, which cost no great amount of trouble, have been rewarded by the happiest and most brilliant results. I am accustomed, therefore, to regard myself as one of fortune's favourites, and am never deficient in courage. Yet I always bear in mind that prosperity may desert me at any moment, —and thus prosperity makes me doubly circumspect. If great misfortunes were to overtake me, whether of a physical or a moral nature—if my health were to decline, I should naturally suffer like other men, but I should be found fully prepared to encounter these evils; I should continue to look back with a cheerful spirit upon the long period of bygone happiness which I had enjoyed, and my internal tranquillity would be influenced only to a certain extent, and not destroyed. That very independence which I first mentioned, enables one to encounter every species of misfortune, and to me at least prosperity and adversity have quite another signification than to other men;—and this has ever been a main feature of my mental constitution.

You ask me, dear Charlotte, in the letter which I had the pleasure to find awaiting my arrival, and for which I have not yet thanked you, whether I have ever felt a fervent desire? Undoubtedly I have experienced this emotion;—although it is equally true,—and I mention this not as a fact deserving of praise, when perhaps it should rather be considered as a source of self-reproach,—that at a very early age I had attained to a state of tranquillity which no ordinary circumstance could interrupt. I learned, at an early period of life, to be content with my own reflections and sensations independent of every foreign influence; and now this repose, this retiring within one's self, harmonizes perfectly with my age, and becomes, therefore, doubly natural. I am also perfectly convinced that this tranquillity, this inde-

pendence, has not lessened the warmth of my emotions. There are, however, but few men who are capable of comprehending how it can happen that one can be free from restless desires, and be able to suffer privation without pain, and shall yet receive the gifts of fortune with the greatest thankfulness; but to me it appears extremely natural. You must not, however, imagine that I blame the existence of ardent or even turbulent desire in others. Every man has and must have peculiarities, and whilst retaining my own, and not permitting myself to be attracted by others, I cannot condemn contrary opinions. I am very much indebted to you, therefore, for every expression of your esteem—every renewed assurance of the constancy of this sentiment: they are always equally agreeable to me.

I trust you have been again employed about the narrative of your life; I rejoice in the expectation of receiving it. In ten or twelve days I shall leave this place, and hope to find letters from you awaiting my arrival in Berlin. With sincere affection, yours,

H.

LETTER XXI.

TEGEL, August 11, 1823.

The day before yesterday I went to Berlin ;—yesterday I returned, and was exceedingly delighted, dear Charlotte, to find a letter and packet awaiting my arrival. From this it appears that you are again well, and growing accustomed to your new habitation, and that you feel yourself better whilst employed in superintending the improvement of your garden.

I thank you most sincerely for the continuation of the narrative of your life. Although I have not been able, as you may well imagine, to peruse it upon this the first day since my arrival, I have yet run my eye over its contents, and am exceedingly pleased with all that I have seen, and feel perfectly assured that every portion will equally delight me. Dividing it into years is exactly the system which I wished you to follow ; and so far from being frightened by the copiousness which such a plan involves, I find in it an especial charm. I beg of you to continue it upon the same plan, and, if you have the desire and leisure, to prosecute with industry and courage that which you have commenced so beautifully ; but, above all, do not weary in reference to the details of the narrative. As copiousness consists in the perfect description of every individuality, and as it is from this source the principal charm and importance of such a narrative is derived, it were a pity to avoid it ;—but yet you must not attempt more than is compatible with ease,—it must not be made a wearisome task ; there must be no self-sacrifice, but it is to be a glance thrown upon the past with him who takes a sincere, heartfelt, and ever-continuing interest in your welfare. I now for the first time recognise

the plan which you intend to follow. You will first describe your parents and your home, and then speak of yourself. You do well to pursue this subject until the death of your parents: were you to adopt any other plan, you could not fully pourtray your own character, and it is far better to keep all that refers to them apart from yourself, rather than unite the two narratives. I particularly thank you for the dedication, and am convinced of the literal truth of the descriptive portions of your narrative;—all is in strict accordance with your character, and deeply impressed with the peculiarities of your mind, which are precisely such as are best calculated to give especial value to such a narrative. Your remark in the preface, that in drawing up a record of the past we live life over again, is very true; but there is necessarily a great difference between the emotions produced by reality and those which mere memory calls forth.

When events of a painful nature occur, the harsh and cold reality produces depression and anguish, which is further increased by the feeling of uncertainty as to what shall follow;—memory softens these emotions into a gentle sadness; pain no longer exists as an isolated, solitary point: it diffuses itself throughout our whole existence, and thus assumes an aspect of mildness unlike its true character.

Retrospective reflections, which have for their object the investigation of the secret recesses of the heart, exert over us a truly beneficent and salutary influence. However well we may already have become acquainted with ourselves, yet the oftener we attempt to pourtray our own character, the greater will be the clearness and precision of the picture; many of the single lineaments will become more correct, and the whole more consistent with truth.

You need not entertain a fear that by your narrative you can lose any portion of my esteem. Such copiousness of style as shall unfold the history of a life from its earliest stage of development is precisely that which is most cal-

culated to protect from misunderstanding, error, and false criticism. I am sure you will agree with me, that we estimate the worth of a character rather by general conduct than by individual acts. Men of ordinary minds attend solely to the latter: this is equally true of the laws which govern society; but the power which pierces through the heart attains to a knowledge of the disposition, purpose, whole nature, and character of the mind;—and history arrives at the same end. Every connected narrative which endeavours to distinguish between, and to exhibit effects apart from their causes, is history, and produces a similar effect, whatever the subject may be,—whether the event be of a nature affecting the destinies of the world—or the history of a simple, private individual. Generally we do not desire to peruse the events of a person's life that we may at the same time pronounce judgment upon them:—at least such is my opinion.

The contemplation of an amiable character—the consideration of the source whence it arises and the effects it produces—excites pleasing emotions in the mind of the contemplator, when the subject is agreeable to him and awakens his sympathies, without his having either to criticise or to form an opinion. He sees (if it be possible to separate the two), generalities in separate existences—humanity itself in the individual. On the other hand, I am convinced—and that part which I have already perused has confirmed me in this conviction—that your narrative will give me reason to approve of those sentiments which many years since your appearance and conversation—and at a later period your letters and history—have called forth, from which source my warm, active, and never-changing sympathy has taken its origin, and I feel assured that it will serve both to support and even to extend this emotion by new examples of the justice of my opinions. Continue, therefore, to write, dear Charlotte, with courage, and without a single fear of misconception on my part. H.

LETTER XXII.

September 10, 1823.

I have now perused, with much attention and great pleasure, that part of the narrative which I lately received, and again I thank you most sincerely and heartily for it. I have chosen for its perusal those times in which I enjoyed the most perfect leisure, in order that I might be able to transport myself into the different positions and situations which you have depicted.

Some of these have appeared to me uncommonly charming and attractive,—and this must not astonish you. The life of a child is a most unimportant subject when we confine ourselves to immediate results alone; but when we have before us a minute and copious narrative, it is quite otherwise;—it is no longer the result which becomes the object of contemplation, but it is the change which is going on in the soul, under the influence of external circumstances—the internal development of thoughts and emotions. In this point of view the life of a child is not only as attractive, but it is in truth even more so than that of an adult; for the period of childhood gives more fully the elements of comparison. Thus for instance, I can with great pleasure compare your character as a child with that of your parents, and again with your own at a more mature age; and in the perusal of your autobiography these three points of observation have ever stood distinctly before me.

It is perfectly evident that the characteristic feature of your mind as a child, and which we shall always find manifesting itself as you proceed with the history of your life, is a certain spirituality of being. You certainly appear, at an early period of childhood, to have paid uncommon attention

to all that was passing around you;—and yet not so much for the purpose of living in these events, as to select materials for the formation of an internal world of your own, peculiar to yourself. It is equally observable that, for this peculiarity of your nature, you are indebted to your father, in whom it was also equally present, though somewhat modified in form, and deriving its origin from other sources.

In reference to the characters of your parents and their relative worth, it is not easy to form an opinion. Judging them according to their conduct in life, your mother's character would create the most favourable impression. She was practical in her views—active, spirited, intelligent, affectionate, and benevolent—not in a trifling, but in the true sense of these expressions. She possessed decidedly the higher character of the two. In your father's we miss that practical energy which is yet more necessary in a man than in a woman. But we must abstain from forming an unfavourable opinion of him;—it is perfectly evident that we do not possess the means to enable us to penetrate into his internal nature; and it is extremely probable that he never found an opportunity unreservedly and freely to disclose the peculiarities of his nature. In reference to his wife, he could not take such a position; at a later period he might have done this in reference to yourself, and perhaps to a certain extent this did occur;—but your pages will disclose this as you proceed. Yet it rarely happens, and then only with reluctance, that a father can perfectly disclose himself to a daughter whose mental nature has grown superior to his own.

There was also combined with your father's internal character (by this term I mean especially to refer to that inclination which he possessed above all others, to occupy himself with his own meditations) a something which, although we cannot say it was truly corporeal, was yet separate from and perfectly independent of his volition and

consciousness. This peculiarity, which in its nature somewhat resembles animal magnetism—this habit of indulging in dreams, points to a something which possesses a mysteriousness that evades our reasoning faculties both in reference to cause and effect; and it indeed sometimes assumes the appearance of an unknown power—an indeterminate existence, which prevents our forming decisive opinions in reference to the character in which it exists.

I confess that I have no predilection for a character of this description. I require in myself lucidness of thought and a clear conception of what passes in my own mind, so that no mental process shall go on without on my part direct and well-determined volition. I naturally possess great power and self-command,—partly the result of the original conformation of my mind, and partly derived from the habits of a long life, which date their beginning from a very early period of my existence; and there is to me something painful in the very idea of a condition similar to your father's, who, according to the dream which you have narrated, believed himself to be ruled over by a strange spirit. I am very careful how I permit myself to judge, to the slightest extent, of your father's character, as I shall ever be in reference to any person so closely connected with you.

In respect to yourself, I may say that both your parents should have watched you more carefully and continuously. It would have been difficult for your mother, on account of the great difference of character between you, to have influenced you, in the strict sense of the word, educationally;—she was, moreover, partial in her views, and would have endeavoured to make you precisely like herself. She allowed you greater freedom than is proper for children—most probably either because she could not succeed in her plans, or because your father sometimes protected you against her unreasonable expectations. Precisely on account of the greater delicacy, gentleness, and reflectiveness of your

nature, it might have proved beneficial if she could have instilled a portion of her own character into yours. But this is merely a blind conjecture, at best but a trifling remark; for other plans have produced such good results that it is superfluous to indulge in a disquisition having in view the determination of the question whether a different system of education might not have produced a character still more perfect. Had it been possible for your mother to have imparted to you a portion of her nature, it might indeed have lessened the number of unpleasant circumstances to which you have been exposed; it might have excluded many, and have given you greater power to endure others; but much in your nature would then have remained undeveloped and unknown; and when the enjoyment of fortune (by which word I merely understand the absence of pain, or positive pleasure) comes into competition with the possession of a beautiful and gifted soul, so as to compel us to relinquish the one or the other, I do not hesitate to say that it is better to give up the external advantages.

Your aunt in L—— has certainly exercised a great influence on the development of your character. She possessed a truly amiable nature, and both in thought and action was much more nearly related to you, than was your own mother.

It has most agreeably surprised me to find Dohm and his wife mentioned in this part of your narrative. I knew them well. Before I went to the University, whilst residing in Berlin, I for some time received lessons from him; at that time, however, I saw little or nothing of his wife; and shortly afterwards he was appointed ambassador to Aachen. During the same year that I met you in Pymont, dear Charlotte, I travelled to the Rhine, and spent eight days with Dohm. As he was closely engaged in his bureau, I passed much time with his wife, who always pleased me extremely. She was, as you remark, very pretty, and possessed naturally an agreeableness of manner, such as is but seldom met with.

Since that time I have not seen her, but in 1817 I met him at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, on his return from Switzerland. Many years had intervened since our last meeting, and we had both experienced many changes. His conduct in the Westphalian affair cannot certainly be commended,—perhaps it was not altogether free from weakness; but he was always a well-meaning, honest, and—from the power of his intellect and the extent of his information—interesting man. Ill health had at that time greatly impaired his strength;—he was but a shadow of his former self. Hardly three weeks had elapsed when chance again brought us together. During my journey towards London, and whilst residing in an hotel in Cologne, a great fire occurred during the night in the neighbourhood; and although it was not of a serious nature in reference to human life, yet as the streets in that city are very narrow, it threatened to be sufficiently so to property. I arose and went out. In the passage I met poor Dohm, with a parcel under his arm. Our mutual surprise was great, for neither of us knew that the other was lodging in the same hotel. He died not long afterwards. When I think of him in the costume which you describe, and in the little tragedy you mention, it appears to me truly singular.

You ask me whether I am familiar with the country around Minden in Prussia and the Porta Westphalica. No, I am not. Whenever I have been in that province, I have always been in great haste, and I have never once visited those districts. I regard them, however, as very interesting for other reasons than simply because they hold an important place in history. It is scarcely probable that I shall ever travel again—that I shall ever do more than merely move on in the narrow circle in which I now revolve,—and in all probability I shall never see you again.

I perceive that you want my advice upon some subject. Write to me without delay, and when I can advise you, I will do it with pleasure. It is true, however, I do not lay

much stress either upon asking or giving advice. Generally speaking, they who ask, know what they wish to do, and act accordingly. A man may permit himself to be enlightened by others upon many points, even upon subjects of expediency and duty,—but he must determine his course of action for himself. Farewell.—Unalterably yours,

H.

LETTER XXIII.

TEGEL, 28th Sept. 1832.

I have just received your letter, dear Charlotte, posted on the 23d, for which I sincerely thank you. Although I have not sufficient time fully to reply to its contents to-day, yet I will not defer sending you my advice upon the step which you contemplate in reference to the Duke of Brunswick. I am not acquainted with the Duke nor with any person in his State who possesses the slightest influence over him, and I cannot therefore positively say what effect your letter will be likely to produce; yet on the whole I am decidedly in favour of the course you purpose to follow, and would advise you to write in the most direct and immediate manner. I cannot perceive how it is possible that your request should militate in the slightest degree against your success. I need not say that there is nothing in it either improper or indiscreet;—and it is probable that he will examine into the merits of your case and grant your petition. I also advise you to write direct to him, by post, without the intervention of any one, and that as quickly as possible—that is, as soon as you learn that he is in Brunswick. Do not seek further advice from your friend upon this subject; and should he attempt to dissuade you from sending the letter which you have already written, do not follow his counsel.

You have in your possession letters from the deceased Duke who fell on the plains of Waterloo; and in these he expressed much sympathy for your position, and permitted you to entertain the hope that at the termination of the campaign he would have settled a pension upon you. Send the original letters to his son, and rest your claim to a fa-

vourable consideration upon those expressions of his father's regard and sympathy; and if he desires to have any corroboration of your statements, refer him to your friend in Brunswick. State in your letter that his father was induced to express himself thus favourably, partly from an attentive consideration of your circumstances, which were well known to him, but that he had been much more powerfully influenced by the great sacrifices which you had made. Tell him also that your present position merits the same consideration, and that a small but certain income would be of great value to you. Do not forget to add—for it may influence him powerfully—that you regard his father's letters as sacred and dear memorials, and express the hope that he will return them. I will by no means encourage you to indulge in the expectation that this step will be successful; for it may happen that the result will be quite otherwise: all that you can do is to endeavour to make a refusal painful to him. But I think it extremely probable that the sight of his father's handwriting may deeply impress and predispose him strongly in favour of your petition. It is for this reason that I decidedly advocate a direct application from yourself; for if the subject is brought under his notice by another person, I am perfectly convinced that it will produce no effect. I do not know whether the laws regulating pensions in Brunswick require the recipient to reside within the kingdom—most probably such is the case: but take no notice at present of this subject. If he grants you one, and makes it at the same time dependent upon this condition, it will then be time enough to petition him a second time to absolve you from a compliance with this law. With the same unalterable regard, yours,

H.

LETTER XXIV.

BERLIN, 18th Oct. 1823.

I have already noticed the most important part of your last letter, dear Charlotte—that is to say, in reference to your present circumstances;—and I am anxious to discover from your next whether you have followed my advice. Of course the result is uncertain, but the step which you have taken cannot be followed by any bad consequences, and we cannot say what may happen.

I think it of great importance that we should never neglect any opportunity of exercising a control over the ordinary course of events; instead of neglecting such opportunities, we ought to avail ourselves of them whenever they exist, and weave the result into the common web of life. This should be our line of conduct more especially in relation to affairs which have already reached a certain point of development—as in the case of your prior acquaintance with the deceased Duke, who has expressed himself so favourably that it would be folly not to pursue the business still farther. At the same time such a practice also leads to a knowledge of human nature, and next to the good results which we can now and then produce either by our arrangements or actions, there is nothing more useful than the habits of observation and research thus acquired, and the consequent amassing of experience; at least this is by far the most interesting of all our occupations.

The tendency to regard the events of life as we do the incidents of a drama may not perhaps be equally strong in all men, but in my nature it has existed perhaps to a greater extent than was compatible with propriety; and the contemplation of the development of events, as well as of the

characters of men, proved a never-failing source of pleasure to me, even when I found myself surrounded by circumstances which required my active coöperation. I have not only enjoyed a great amount of internal happiness from this habit, but it has also afforded me much assistance in every species and variety of occupation. It is easy to comprehend the cause of this happiness. It has its origin in two distinct sources:—In the first place, we experience pleasure whenever we contemplate the exercise of active power, and enjoy still further gratification from the discovery of the secret connections of things and events; and then we become, as far as we ourselves are concerned, more indifferent as to the results which may ensue. It is certain that our sympathy for others cannot be in any way diminished by this indifference, whilst we thereby acquire coolness and circumspection in all our actions. This attitude of mind, especially when the events contemplated happen to be of great importance, imparts to us the conviction, that however much they may operate against our individual interests, they are yet in accordance with the deep designs of destiny;—and to be able to catch but a glimpse of this plan—to recognise but the smallest portion of this design—is to enjoy an intellectual gratification of the very highest order.

The same remarks do not apply to the events of an individual life: at least such is my opinion. It would seem to me mere vanity and egotism,—feelings which I could never permit myself to entertain,—were I to suppose that any thing happening to myself was connected with the hidden destinies of the world. It is true I am a portion of the whole—but I am only a mere atom. Intellectually, therefore, I am not interested farther than to know how I shall conduct myself,—whether I shall be firm when exposed to adversity—moderate when placed in the midst of prosperity—and whether I always pay the debt due by a man to his duty and conscience. Beyond this, things may go as they will: I will seek to accommodate myself to them as well as I

can. The comparatively unimportant events which affect myself and family afford me a high degree of pleasure when I contemplate the persons, circumstances, and other things which are connected with them; and this pleasure often compensates for many occurrences of a very unpleasant nature.

It must be well understood, however, that this desire to contemplate and investigate the events and circumstances of life must not proceed from idle curiosity—it must not be of a nature similar to that which conducts the lover of pleasure to a theatre,—but it must spring from an intense interest in the welfare of humanity, not merely in man's temporal happiness—for this is by no means the most important consideration—it must be an interest which connects itself with his internal being, employment, and nature; it must spring from a desire to appreciate more thoroughly the nature of man, from the contemplation of his unwearied spiritual exertions, and a desire to learn as much as possible of the nature of the movements, and the apparently inseparable connections of those wheels which together work out the destinies of man,—in order so to influence and control them, that true, although perhaps not immediately perceived harmony, may result from their action. As man's excellence depends upon the loftiness of his views, so is it with reference to this subject: if the point aimed at is pure, noble, and good, nothing but what is great and exalted will proceed from it.

I beg you to send me the continuation of your autobiography as soon as you have finished what you intend. At any rate, I must ask you to do so between this date and the 15th of November: if this cannot be effected, pray retain it for the present. I go first to Thuringia between the 5th and 15th of November; and afterwards, although not for a lengthened period, to Burgörner. Under any circumstances I shall send you a few lines before my departure. Farewell.—With the sincerest regard, yours,

H.

LETTER XXV.

BERLIN, Nov. 3, 1823.

I thank you very much, dear Charlotte, for your letter of the 12th, which, however, did not arrive until a very late period. I have not yet found an opportunity to peruse the last number of your narrative, and will answer it at a future time. In this letter I shall speak only of your petition to the Duke, and of my own departure.

I return you unaltered the sketch of the letter which you intend to forward to the Duke. It is perhaps somewhat too lengthy,—and I endeavoured to correct this, but soon relinquished the attempt. Under such circumstances, if we would make an impression upon the heart of the reader, it is not a short, smooth, mere business-like letter which is best calculated to produce this result, but one which bears in its language an impress of the heart of the writer; and it is precisely this feature which disappears, at least to a great extent, under the correction of a third person; and thus, instead of improving that which is submitted to us, we weaken or destroy its most important characteristic. Besides, the length of your letter is not a serious evil. The Duke must remark the handwriting of your father: this will excite interest, and even curiosity will induce him to peruse the whole.

I shall leave Berlin in a few days;—have the kindness to address to me at Burgörner, and write upon the envelope —“ If absent, to be kept until return.” Farewell.—Forgive the haste in which I write.

H.

LETTER XXVI.

BURGÖRNER, Nov. 29, 1823.

Here, for the first time, dear Charlotte, I have found an opportunity to read your letter of the 25th of last month, and I have now received yours of the 25th of this, together with a new portion of your manuscript autobiography;—for both of which I heartily thank you. If my departure had not been delayed against my inclination, your first letter would have lain here until my return—for this time I had given no directions to have them forwarded to me—which would have grieved me very much. The letter which has been sent to the Duke carries with it my best wishes for its success. I trust that the plan will not prove fruitless in its results, for I reckon much upon the effect likely to be produced by the letters of his father which you have inclosed.

I am enjoying excellent health in this place. The weather is not merely good for the time of year, but it is in itself always tolerable, and often extremely fine. This day has been really beautiful, and the sun shone out most pleasantly;—he did not indeed elevate himself far above a dense dark cloud which covered the south-western sky, but all above this was perfectly blue.

It is a source of great satisfaction to me to find myself wholly alone, for I have much business to attend to, and would willingly devote some time to my own affairs. I love solitude for its own sake,—and here I am exposed to no interruption.

The pleasure which I constantly experience in finding myself surrounded by my own proves an inexhaustible source of happiness superadded to my already happy life. I could

never bring myself to regard that state as worthy of being called a happy one, which simply takes the place of a vacancy—fills up as it were a gap in a man's mind,—which negation of existence may be regarded as nearly related to a state of unhappiness. It has ever been my opinion that true, exalted happiness begins to exist at the period at which a man, previously in a state of self-satisfied indifference, first becomes conscious of the true birth of inclination and sentiment within him, by his increased activity. He is then able, for the first time, to compare his former state of indifference with his present active existence, and he immediately perceives the defectiveness, the want of a something in that mental state with which he was previously so contented. I have never manifested violent desires or passionate inclinations,—they are foreign to my nature. But this is a temperament which I am not inclined to praise, nor will I urge anything in its defence;—it may easily have arisen from a want of that energy which is required to prosecute most of the more important and serious affairs of life. I have not experienced this deficiency in an equal degree at every period of my life: at present it is natural, and comports with my years. All that vivacity of perception, all those passionate impulses, which are the characteristics of youth, should be first extinguished in the man: and when this occurs, his power of determination and capacity for exertion may long continue to exist.

I now come to speak of the last part of your autobiography,—the receipt of which I have already thankfully acknowledged at the commencement of this letter. I commenced and finished its perusal yesterday without interruption, and it has afforded me the greatest pleasure. It is not of the slightest consequence if, as you fear, some of the events should really belong to another date than that which is assigned to them;—it is impossible for memory to recall them all in their true order of occurrence. It would puzzle me very much were I called upon to narrate

as circumstantially the events of any one of the years of my boyhood;—it is astonishing to me that your memory has proved so retentive.

As you speak so much of composition in the present portion of your narrative, I will take occasion to tell you, which I do most faithfully, that it again decidedly exhibits this excellence;—all that it contains is admirably conceived and expressed.

The way in which your character has been developed has interested me very much. Your remark is perfectly true, “that the information which you obtained principally through your own exertions, and accidentally by means of intercourse with grown-up persons, has been powerful and lasting in its effects, simply because it was so small in amount, and fell upon a heart desirous of a better and more liberal education.” I might make further inferences. It would not astonish me if this accidental education had contributed more powerfully to form your character as it stands, than if all its elements had been previously systematically arranged. We must not always regard education as a direct guide to propriety of deportment, a good character, and a tolerably extensive amount of information: it often effects much more than merely to collect together a number of influences to be brought to bear upon the mind to be educated,—the contemplated result of which plan is often completely frustrated, and in its place a series of effects is produced arising from the energy of the individual being placed in opposition to these influences, which their direct action could not have called forth;—for the result of any system of education depends entirely upon whether a man is capable of applying the influences brought to bear upon him to the ends of self-culture, or whether he permits himself to be moulded by them.

I have likewise observed with great pleasure that my opinions are confirmed, and that the same peculiarities which now characterize your disposition and intellect were

perceptible also in your childhood. It has always been my opinion that a man cannot change the essential features of his nature: he may relinquish errors—he may exchange virtuous and good habits for vicious courses; but his nature, whether mild or violent—whether more directed to external action or to inward contemplation—whether penetrating to the hidden depths of things, or resting content with superficial views—whether betraying weakness and vacillation, or firmness and decision in the occurrences of life,—ever remains from childhood to death the same.

These are the most important remarks which I have to make at present in reference to this part of your autobiography; I shall notice other features at a future time. I again repeat my thanks, and shall ever continue to feel grateful for the trouble you have so kindly taken to please me. Do not for the future attach any separate documents to your narrative: if they are letters containing something which it is necessary to know, be so kind as to copy them into it. I wish not only to become acquainted with your character, but to learn it as depicted by your own hand. Such a plan connects your present with your former self, and this self-description and self-judging has a double charm for me.

As I shall shortly leave this place, and shall not arrive in Berlin before Christmas or New-year's Day, I am sorry to be compelled to request you not to write to me before Christmas Eve, but at such a time that your letter may reach Berlin shortly before the New year. My wife is perfectly well and cheerful. She is accustomed to visit one of the spas every year,—sometimes alone, sometimes I accompany her. This year she was in Marienbad, but it was not for the benefit of her health, as she was not ill; so that what you have heard must refer to a prior indisposition, or it must have been an exaggeration. With sincere thanks for your kindness, and with the most affectionate regard, yours,

H.

LETTER XXVII.

BERLIN, Jan. 12, 1824.

Your letter, dear Charlotte, of the 12th of last month, has given me the greatest pleasure. I thank you with my whole heart for all the kind expressions which it contains; accept also my warmest thanks for your New-year's good wishes and congratulations, and feel assured that I return them from the depths of my soul. No person can take a deeper interest in your welfare than I do,—no one can desire greater happiness for you,—and therefore no one can take so hearty an interest in your prosperity;—of this remain unchangeably confident.

Give, my dear Charlotte, unceasing and earnest attention to the preservation of your health and tranquillity of mind. I am convinced that our happiness or unhappiness depends more upon the way in which we meet the events of life, than upon the nature of those events themselves. A man cannot exactly give himself a joyous, cheerful temperament, for this is the gift of Heaven; but we can to a great extent prepare ourselves to encounter with tranquillity, to bear courageously, and by our presence of mind to turn aside, or lessen in number the many adverse circumstances which, in a greater or less degree, life prepares for all. In the adoption of such a line of conduct, we do not endeavour to render ourselves independent of a higher power—(if such were our design, we should not long remain happy;)—our motive is simply to endeavour to protect ourselves against unpleasant events. But we certainly act both in accordance with reason and the will of Heaven, when, with as much energy as our powers will permit us to exhibit, we oppose ourselves to fortune, and seek to modify her in-

fluences by strengthening our own mental powers. I make these remarks, dear Charlotte, in order to dissuade you from tormenting yourself with imaginary evils; for I perceive that owing to a dream you have surrendered yourself to uneasy presentiments of future ill. Your words—"Do not regard my anxious despondency too closely—do not view my language too critically; misfortunes always create superstition,—the unhappy fear all things, and see nothing in the events of life but sad forebodings; the happy know nothing of superstition"—have very much affected me, and have excited my deepest sympathy, and it is from these emotions alone that my remarks have proceeded. You possess so clear and determined an intellect, and you have expressed yourself so correctly upon this subject when writing to me of the peculiarities of your father's character, that you ought not to permit yourself to be influenced by so trivial an omen, if it can be deservedly called by such a name.

Do not regard what I have just said as intended to convey a reproach, for it is certainly far from my inclination to offer one upon the subject; but I do most earnestly desire that you should not thus continually torment yourself, that you should not thus injure your health and disturb your occupations, and that you should not deliver yourself up to presentiments which may either call forth sorrow for events which may never occur, or lead you to anticipate with premature grief those circumstances which may actually happen.

I consider it not improper that I should express myself thus clearly upon this subject, for I fear that the state of mental agitation in which you live may otherwise not pass quickly away, and also because you have often given me the pleasing assurance that my remarks tranquillize and comfort you.

I shall remain here continuously until the spring; be so kind, therefore, as to continue to address me as usual. You

will also confer a great kindness upon me if you will send me the continuation of your autobiography. I have thoroughly considered all that you have called my attention to upon this subject; and think that the following plan may be adopted. That which you have yet to describe arranges itself, as far as I know, under three heads: first, the continuation of your early life up to the time of your marriage; secondly, the description of this event and the period following; and lastly, the years intervening between the present and that time. The first of these three divisions it can hardly be difficult for you to continue: as far as I remember, it contains nothing the remembrance of which can occasion pain; and on the other hand, many joyous recollections will be awakened; besides, it will be devoted to a period of your existence which completes the history of your education and early development; and this has an especial charm for me. I shall not hesitate to entreat you, therefore, at any rate to complete this portion of your autobiography, and to forward it to me. How much you shall transmit I leave it to yourself to determine;—this must be arranged according to circumstances and the nature and extent of your occupations.

Whether you will then have the kindness to write and send me the second period of your life is another question. In the first place, I need not say that it would afford me much pleasure;—this it would be sure to do, and to a very great extent; but I perfectly agree with you that writing the description of weary months—indeed years—of continued anxiety and agitation, would be very painful; and, viewing the subject in this light, it is impossible that it should give me pleasure,—the thought of the pain endured in its composition must necessarily embitter all the gratification which the narrative could otherwise afford. I certainly do not coincide with your opinions in reference to the recollection of past sorrows. Speaking for myself, it would certainly be painful, but with the pain there would be con-

joined a sad pleasure; and I should conceive such an exercise beneficial to the formation of my character, and as being calculated to bestow upon me that strength which every man needs to enable him to encounter life and destiny. But I fully perceive that this line of thought is not applicable to your case; and seeing that I have passed a far happier life than you have done, I almost mistrust my own opinions upon this subject. Examine for yourself, dear Charlotte, and act accordingly; determine for yourself whether you can enter into a description of the second period of your life, or whether you shall stop when you have completed the first. I am fully and deeply convinced that you would make any sacrifice to give me pleasure; but do not forget that a line of conduct which involves a great sacrifice on your part, cannot naturally afford me any gratification.

The third of the above-mentioned periods does not appear in itself to require any serious deliberation; but you yourself must determine whether it can be treated apart from the second, or whether it will not be necessary, in order to pourtray the progressive development of your mind and disposition, to refer more frequently to it than would be compatible with your tranquillity. If this should prove to be the case, the third part must equally be passed over in silence. It will at any rate delight me extremely to possess a perfect picture of your life from the period of childhood to that of youth, pourtrayed with the greatest copiousness of detail;—continue it, therefore, up to the time of your marriage.

Now farewell. Put away anxious care;—trust the beneficent powers of fate, and do not believe that there are existences which, not content with the suffering which arises from real misfortune, purposely try to torment the heart with unfounded fears. With the same unalterable attachment, yours,

H.

LETTER XXVIII.

Resignation to that which may happen, hope and trust that that alone will occur which is good and beneficial, and firmness when adversity overtakes us,—these are the only efficient bulwarks which we can erect against destiny.

* * * * * *

You call my attention to a passage in the Bible, and ask me whether I have read it? I have perused the Bible through and through many times, last during my residence in London, and I am well acquainted with the chapter you cite contained in the Epistle to the Corinthians. It is one of the most beautiful in the New Testament when rightly understood, but, at the same time, one of those which the reader may easily clothe in his own sentiments, into which a portion of his individual feelings may be readily infused; and even when these are good and pure, they may still be quite opposed to its true signification. With the passage in the original Greek text this cannot happen so easily.

In the German language we have but one word, Love (*Liebe*), which is certainly in its signification pure, noble, and beautiful; but it is applied to emotions of a very heterogeneous nature. In the Greek language there is one word to express that calm, mild, passionless love which is always directed to the contemplation of the noblest and most exalted subjects, and this is never employed to designate love as it exists between the sexes, however pure and refined it may be in its nature; and this word, which is much more frequently used by the Christian Greek writers than by earlier authors, is the very one which is used in this chapter. I by no means intend to find fault with Luther's translation. I confess much rather that our Ger-

man word is dearer to me than any other on account of its comprehensiveness, and because it embraces within itself every allied emotion of the soul.

There are two facts which render the contents of this chapter, and the idea which should be connected with this word Love in the sense used by the Apostle, extremely noble and beautiful. The first is, that Love itself is spoken of as being eternal in its nature, not merely in reference to eternity but in its own self, and it is contrasted in this respect with many other things which are great and estimable but yet transitory in their nature; it is pourtrayed not as a solitary, perishable sentiment, but as an all-comprehensive condition of the soul diffused throughout the whole family of mankind. Love, it is said, never ceases to exist, and this sufficiently proves that it must be directed towards objects which are themselves imperishable and everlasting, and that it must be so intimately connected with the heart, that it can never be separated from it under any circumstances or modes of existence. This remark is not made in reference to a peculiar love, not even to that of higher existences, but it is intended to apply to that internal state of mind which pours itself forth upon all things that are worthy of love, and upon which it can bestow itself. Why Love alone should be called perfect, when all other earthly things and emotions are termed imperfect, it is not easy at first to understand, for the Apostle evidently calls all those emotions of the mind which he enumerates perishable, because they can never exist in a perfect state in finite man, and Love, however pure and elevated its nature may be, is yet but one of those emotions which are perishable in the sense of the word used by the Apostle. It is possibly for this reason:—all other gifts and emotions of the mind are termed perishable, because, to render them otherwise, they require an amount of intelligence and power which cannot exist in finite and perishable man. Love, on the other hand, originates in a sense of want; it belongs

purely and entirely to sentiment and disposition; it is in its nature self-sacrificing, yielding, and obedient, and therefore not so hemmed in by the trammels of our finite condition. Of course it could not exist in man if there were not a something in the depths of his nature, binding him to and connecting him with the Eternal; and when Love's aspirations render him happy, he then becomes more conscious of the existence of this relationship. But, as I remarked at the commencement of this letter that every one received this passage of the Bible according to his individual feelings, and could do this without falling into error, so I confess that I take this word Love as being perfectly and essentially distinct from that emotion which is felt between the sexes. I recognise in it simply a description of a far more exalted emotion of the soul, which is free from all selfishness, refined from every passion, which dwells with benevolent regard upon all things, bears a favourable or adverse destiny with calmness and resignation, and from whose tranquillity there emanates an animating warmth which infuses itself into all surrounding objects. It is for this reason it is said Love envieth not—is not puffed up, &c. For the same reason Hope and Faith are associated with her, but she is represented as being elevated above both, and especially as superior to works. This may appear at first strange, but it is very right: whenever the emotion of pure Love is present, works spontaneously flow from the feelings she inspires. This condition of the mind is essentially opposed to that in which a man is always demanding, always unquiet and full of care, which leads him to pay far more attention to the exercise of justice than to the strict practice of duty, and fills him with self-esteem and self-approbation.

This is the view which I take of this passage in the Bible, but I am far from asserting that no other is applicable to it.

H.

LETTER XXIX.

You ask me to explain the difference between prophesying and speaking with tongues, as mentioned by the Apostle in the 14th Chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians. It is certainly a very difficult passage, and one upon which we may spend much time in meditation, without arriving at its true meaning. In the New Testament we frequently find that which is clear and intelligible combined with what is less distinct, and it is precisely this feature which makes it so very beautiful. All that is necessary for the tranquillization, improvement, and true development of the nature of man is lucid and easily intelligible, whilst those passages which are less obvious, nay dark in their signification, are by no means detrimental to this effect.

So long as a man continues to fulfil his duty in this life (and this is all he has to attend to), so long will he want something which shall conduct him beyond this stage of existence. Such passages as these, occurring in a book which is given to be always in his hand, tend to supply this want, and as it is only by deep contemplation that he can penetrate beyond this life, mysteries are placed before him that he may learn by reflection to fathom them.

The following is the light in which I view the phrase—
“Speaking with tongues.”

The Apostle connects speaking with the tongue, or with tongues, with the spirit (*Geist*); and prophesying, with the understanding (*Verstand*); (for without doubt Luther has thus rendered the Greek text, although I have no German Bible by me to which I can refer.) By the expression “speaking with tongues” he understands, in my opinion, that living,

animated flow of language which appears to come from a distant source of inspiration, in which the speaker utters the overflowings of his heart without troubling himself to know whether he is understood or heard: it is thus that a man converses with himself and God. By the term prophecy (*Weissagung*) the Apostle by no means understands the power of foretelling future events, but the public teaching and unfolding of high and important truths: whoever assumes this position is called in Eastern language a Prophet. Now such a man has an external object to fulfil: it is explanation and instruction towards which his thoughts are directed, and his language must be of such a nature as shall at once be calculated to influence his hearers and be within the reach of their intellectual powers. For this reason the Apostle very wisely defines the relation which exists between these two states of the soul.

Inspired utterance is the first and most important gift, and must take the lead in man; for upon the converse which he holds with God depends his power to elevate others through his influence; by this means, as the Apostle says, he also elevates himself, for a man cannot edify others without being himself at the same time edified. But this internal inspiration is fruitless to others: the gift of prophecy is far better adapted for the promulgation of truth, for by this means inspiration is conveyed to the minds of others. The highest excellence is to be inspired—that is, to speak with tongues, and at the same time to prophesy—that is, to instruct. The fifth verse exhibits the distinction between these two gifts in a very clear light: the Apostle desires that all may speak with tongues, but he had much rather that they should all instruct, because the latter is more useful, and supersedes the former.

The passage also equally refers to the manners of the primitive church, in which every man was permitted to address the congregation. The expression,—to speak with the tongue, or with tongues, appears singular;—but it is

a very proper mode of expression. In the Greek language, by the word "tongues" is understood words foreign, unknown, or but little used, and this explanation of the word may be also taken in connection with the passage; we may also remember that the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles was followed by their conversing in foreign, and to them previously unknown languages. Both instances are in harmony with the idea of inspired utterance, during which men wonder at their own language, and think but little as to whether it is understood by others or not. But I do not consider either of the above interpretations applicable here, especially because it is "speaking with the tongue" and not "with tongues" alone, that is spoken of.

But a much easier explanation of the passage may be given. Whenever we speak of things which are well understood, or self-evident, or when we treat of subjects which we have previously made intelligible to ourselves by reflection, the tongue is then merely the dead instrument of speech: it is the understanding, the intellect, which, properly speaking, converses; but when we mention thoughts which suddenly occur to us, and are of an exalted or mysterious nature, it is not the understanding which speaks, but the words come as it were to the tongue without our knowing from whence they originate. This we might call talking with the spirit, but it is more figurative to mention the tongue as the source of speech, and as the Apostle evidently refers that which is thus uttered to a higher Power, to the Holy Spirit itself,—he can only attribute to this organ that which the speaker declares. The Holy Ghost—that is, God himself—places truths upon it which man could neither have discovered, nor with his intellectual powers fully comprehend.

We say very correctly of a man who says that which he does not believe, that he speaks with the tongue and not with the heart: here the expression is precisely similar although in reference to another subject. In the Apostle's

meaning the tongue speaks (under the influence of internal inspiration, a gift of God) that which the intellect, reasoning and judging according to human methods of induction, is unable to comprehend. Viewed in this light, there is something very beautiful in the instructions of the Apostle. We should endeavour, at least we should wish to reach a state of pious inspiration, to commune with ourselves and God in a way which we rather perceive to exist, than stop to examine; but we should strive yet more to make these communings clear and intelligible to our understandings, and when we endeavour to instruct others it should be in accordance with this latter design. I do not know whether the above will please you, but this is the way in which I explain the passage.

H.

LETTER XXX.

BERLIN, 12th March 1824.

I have received your letter of the 21st, and thank you for it most sincerely. It has vexed me, however, to observe that you have again given yourself much unnecessary care and anxiety. This you must avoid, dear Charlotte, as far as possible, and you must endeavour to acquire in this respect greater self-command. In making this remark, I am actuated by no other motive than the desire to promote your welfare and to increase your mental tranquillity. Whether a letter be written a day earlier or a day later—whether a longer or a shorter time than usual intervenes before its delivery—depends upon so many accidental circumstances, that you must not make yourself unhappy if your expectations are not literally fulfilled.

I recognise to the fullest extent the value of the sentiments which have made you thus anxious on my account; but I am perfectly well, and you need not entertain a single fear in reference to me. I am employed during the whole day in the transaction of serious and important affairs. I seldom leave my room before a late hour in the evening, and am at all times tranquil, active, and cheerful. Such a state of mind would of itself strengthen an infirm state of health—but up to the present time mine has been very good. I am fully aware that a change may easily happen;—within a year—nay within a day, this may occur, but at present there is no appearance of any such event, and when it arrives, it will find me fully prepared to encounter it. Sickness itself would have no power over my mental condition. I have been accustomed from my earliest youth to be rigorous towards myself; I have lived in the constant

exercise of this habit, and have always regarded my corporeal frame as something foreign to myself. I have already given such a direction to my occupations that even if I were to fall into ill health it would not be necessary to discontinue them, although they might be somewhat interrupted. You must not therefore conclude that I would be unhappy even under such circumstances.

It delights me very much to learn from the perusal of your letter, that you are enjoying pretty good health, and that the extraordinary winter we have experienced has not had a prejudicial influence on you, as I sometimes have been led to fear. I love so much the absence of intense cold, that I willingly bear the many little circumstances of a disagreeable nature produced by so mild and changeable a winter. There is something in severe cold more than physically benumbing, and it seems to me that men should never be exposed to it; it gives even to nature herself a sad monotonous appearance; to the poor, it is truly merciless. The lower classes, who, generally speaking, are but little able to protect themselves against its effects, are in consequence much happier in warmer climates, where they are exempt from this plague at least.

You have not sent me for a long time, dear Charlotte, any portion of your autobiography. Perhaps we must blame the shortness of the days and your other occupations for this. When, however, you can find leisure and inclination, it is my wish, as I have always said, that you should continue it down at least to the time of your marriage. When this portion is completed, I will neither entreat nor ask you to do more, but thus far it can only prove an agreeable and interesting occupation. When you have made up a fair-sized packet, have the kindness to forward it to me as usual. But these requests are to be complied with only as far as may be agreeable to yourself and no further, for it is under this condition alone that I could derive any pleasure from the perusal of what you may send. What you have already

forwarded to me presents a portrait so delightful, attractive, and characteristic, that it would be a great pity not to continue the sketch to some point of life, some important event, where it might be naturally discontinued;—and there are but a few years intervening before this could be easily effected.

I spent a few hours to-day in Tegel; and although the weather was by no means fine, yet it gave me a considerable amount of pleasure. The approach of spring is always well marked, and produces in man a kind of renewed existence; he becomes more active, imagines that he is about to enter upon a renewed lease of life, and forgets to a certain extent that the beautiful forms which nature has assumed will continue but for a few months, to be again succeeded by that same season from which it now affords him so much pleasure to escape. If this be a species of self-deception, it is yet one which, equally pleasing, equally constant, accompanies us through life. I remember that I have always experienced the same, or at least nearly allied emotions, from childhood up to the present period of my life. As you live in a garden, you will certainly participate in these sensations. In a city, indeed, season succeeds to season with a sad monotonous uniformity.—With the same unalterable attachment, yours,

H.

LETTER XXXI.

April, 1824.

* * * * * The perfect success of all our undertakings will of course greatly depend upon the extent of our original powers, and these are independent of ourselves. I fully agree with you that the success of our designs depends yet more upon a blessing, high as to its origin and incomprehensible in its nature, whose presence may perhaps, as you remark, depend upon the integrity of our intentions. Your observation, "That it appears as if God would only pour his blessings into pure vessels," pleases me exceedingly. If a man have not this blessing in possession, he cannot charm it towards him. I agree with you that blessings are bestowed on mankind in a very mysterious manner; but the ideas attached to the words happiness and unhappiness are so vague and unsettled, even in the minds of men accustomed to entertain correct views and opinions, that from early youth I have constantly endeavoured to gain clear conceptions upon this subject; and the conclusion at which I have arrived is, that a man is sure to enjoy a certain amount of happiness if he endeavours to render himself independent of external circumstances—if he learns, as far as possible, to extract happiness from every event of a pleasing nature, relative either to men or things, and at the same time maintains his independence, and requires nothing particular either from the one source or the other.

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All merit ceases the moment we perform an act for the sake of its consequences. Truly in this respect we have our reward.

* * * * *

If, dear Charlotte, you have not perfectly understood the contents of my last letter but one, you have on the other hand recognised with pleasure in my last the sincere interest which I take in you and in your destiny. I thank you very much for this recognition of my sentiments of regard towards you, and I again assure you that you may confidently depend upon the unchangeable nature of these sentiments. There is nothing that I more earnestly desire, than that, after encountering so many storms, you may at last enjoy a life perfectly agreeable to yourself, tranquil and free from care. I further hope that your state of health may correspond with this happy condition of affairs, and that you may live in the cheerful enjoyment of those simple pleasures which you have created, and in the memory of all that is dear to you. I am certain that your thoughts dwell particularly upon me, and I rejoice in this conviction. All that I can do to render your life happy, I will do with pleasure. I again repeat the request which I have often made, viz. that you will write to me confidentially and without reserve;—whenever you desire any gratification which your means will not permit you to obtain, lay aside all false delicacy, and be worthy of your own and my confidence. I am always vexed when I think of your exertions continued at a time when your health is suffering; and although I know full well how to honour such conduct, yet I often in my heart wish to see you once again holding a position more in accordance with that you were originally destined to occupy:—with your intellect and turn of mind you would have known well how to occupy your time. Permit me to advise you to seek some recreation during the fine season of this year. Would not a residence at one of the spas prove beneficial to you? Answer me with confidence, dear Charlotte: what passes between us is known to no one but our two selves.

H.

LETTER XXXII.

May.

You have given me a much greater pleasure than you can imagine by forwarding the new part of your autobiography. I have read it with the greatest interest,—in the first place and above all on account of the interest I take in yourself:—in this light the present part is to me a most delightful one, because it describes a period of your life which was spent happily and cheerfully in the society of men whom it was interesting to know. It has vividly carried me back to the past and to the period which the narrative particularly embraces.

Although different modes of life have produced different manners and customs in those German states which lie far apart from each other, yet the spirit of the times is equally indicated by all; and many of the descriptive portions of your narrative, though they do not immediately concern yourself, have yet interested me very much, and amongst these particularly that of Baum, the country-seat of the singular and renowned Count of Lippe-Bückeburg.

The contemplation of the place of residence of a distinguished man is to me always elevating and touching. For instance, I cannot approach Potsdam without experiencing some emotion. Speaking of sovereigns and rulers, I may say that they generally transform to a greater or less extent the districts in which they reside, and stamp them with the marks of their presence, or they leave behind them edifices which create a similar impression. Such characters as these increase the clearness of our conceptions, and from the contemplation of their lives and works we form living pictures in our minds. Even the mere thought that here they have once resided—here they have once walked, con-

veys a something which not only excites our imagination, but moves our sensibilities, however coldly we may reason about it.

Judging from your excellent description of him, Baum has received from its possessor a stamp so peculiar, so attractive, and so beautiful, that our interest in the place has been considerably increased. The union of the luxuriant and attractive in nature, with grandeur and princely pomp in art, is always particularly pleasing; and, judging as far as the few places I have visited in Westphalia and the brief time I spent in them will permit, I should say that the wooded districts of this Duchy must be extremely beautiful, from the abundance of trees and their vigorous and youthful growth. Your description, however, of the Count's mode of life, and the conclusions which may be formed from this source further illustrative of his character, is still more interesting to me.

Delicate attentions paid to an infirm and sickly wife, and the propensity to indulge in philosophic and religious meditations, become doubly amiable when occurring in a man like the Count, whose courage and manliness, combined with certain traits of character more singular than important, was so well known. It has particularly pleased me to see that he never trusted her into any other hands than his own, but constantly carried her, drove her carriage, and was ever with her. The close seclusion in which he lived with this beloved object, and in which he persisted even still more strictly after her death, is sufficient to prove that he possessed an exalted and vigorous mind, rich enough to find in itself that enjoyment which we so often vainly endeavour to find in external objects.

The report that the unfortunate man died from the effects of poison, I regard as one of those tales which were formerly always told in evangelical countries of those who had been in southern lands, more particularly if the circumstances of their lives had placed them in an unfriendly

relation to the clergy. We are not acquainted with any poison, upon the slow and continuous action of which for many years we can reckon with the slightest certainty. *Aqua Toffana* is nothing more than a word without a meaning. Heaven only knows how it has originated, and to which of the known poisons it may be applied, for it is quite certain that it does not refer to any particular one, and still less so to a perfectly unknown poison, or one the properties of which are but little understood.

In a room in the old house here at Tegel there formerly hung many portraits of princes and distinguished men, who were all of them nevertheless nearly related to my deceased father. Amongst the number was one of Count Wilhelm of Lippe Bückeburg, with whom most probably he was personally acquainted. I perfectly well remember this portrait. When this country was in the occupation of the French (I was in Italy at the time) some of the troops were quartered in the house, and the greater number of these portraits were either injured or destroyed; amongst the latter number was included that of the Count of Lippe Bückeburg. I now doubly regret this loss.

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What you relate of yourself as a child,—how you formed pictures in your imagination, for the reality of which you wished, longed, and waited,—is precisely my own case, and has been so from the earliest period of my recollection—I really think ever since I attained my sixth year, which was doubly early with me, as I did not begin to speak until I had reached my third year. In your case the practice originated partly in a strong desire to possess a friend, and partly from the perusal of *Clarissa*; but in my case there was no external cause to which it could be ascribed, at least I do not remember one. The objects which my imagination portrayed—I do not mean the imaginary persons, but rather the circumstances—were of course various; but there was one which, from this early period up to the pre-

sent time, has never once left me, and in all probability will accompany me to the period of my death. Even now, whenever I pass a sleepless night, or find myself alone in a carriage, or take a solitary walk, or have an opportunity of indulging in silent contemplation, the same idea always occupies my thoughts, although of course it presents itself variously changed and modified. As it is a subject which cannot become one of the realities of life, but is confined in its sphere of influence to my ways of thinking, it does not influence my actions,—but it continues to exist, forming a kind of poetical accompaniment to the realities of life. I am grateful, in the highest sense of the word, for this habit of reflection.

It is the natural consequence of mental activity and the active exercise of imagination and sentiment, to throw into the shade the real events of life, and it always proves salutary for us to lessen the too dazzling light—to diminish the too great importance they are apt to assume. Misfortunes are thus rendered less difficult to be endured, pleasure is no longer the slave of fortune, and the thought becomes supportable that happiness is transitory, easily put to flight, and that we may soon be deprived of it.

It will give me the greatest pleasure if you continue to occupy yourself with your autobiography.—Sincerely yours,

H.

LETTER XXXIII.

TEGEL, 15th June 1824.

I have received, dear Charlotte, your letter of the 22d May, and also the one written the last day before the festival of Whitsuntide. I thank you very much for both. I write to you a few days later than usual, because, as you mentioned in your first letter a second which should follow, I preferred waiting its arrival, and answering both at the same time. This will explain the little delay which has taken place.

I am very happy to learn, from the contents of your letters, that you are well, but at the same time you mention a pain in the hand from which you suffer. As this does not yield to the influence of the fine weather which we are now enjoying, it would be as well to be careful lest it should prove to be rheumatism, which might afterwards easily pass into gout. I would advise you—indeed I entreat you, to prevent this by the early use of judicious remedies. Dear, very dear as your letters are to me, yet I could not receive them at the expense of the thought that they occasioned you pain, or that whilst writing them you were struggling against suffering of any kind. Does not this pain interrupt you in your artistic occupations? but I suppose it does not inconvenience you much in this respect, partly because, as you have previously informed me, you have so arranged that others do that which requires exertion, and partly because writing is certainly an occupation which apparently needs no strength whatever,—and yet it is one which is very fatiguing, from the firmness with which the pen must be held to make so many motions.

Writing has always proved a most disagreeable occupation

to me, and even at the present time I do it most unwillingly. This may sound very strange, for I certainly have written a great deal in my lifetime, but it is not on that account the less true,—and I have not written so much as may perhaps be supposed. From my childhood I have possessed a most contemplative turn of mind. I have required but little external to myself, and have never found much pleasure in communicating with others, except when it has incidentally happened. Above all, I have never felt any desire to narrate or describe events: both I have purposely avoided whenever I could, and when otherwise I have been as brief as possible. On the other hand, I have always had pleasure in listening to the communications and narratives of others. Should you discover a little selfishness in this conduct—this wish to receive more than I was willing to give, I will not deny the justice of such an inference; but so it has always been with me. I speak but little, write but little, and have ever kept to these habits. When I make an exception, it is only because I think such conduct on my part will be appreciated, and then of course I seek to make myself agreeable to all.

You appear to be again closely employed with your work, dear Charlotte; and this pleases me very much, if it is not too fatiguing to you. I have always regarded it as a great proof of the strength, power of endurance of your nature, and as a feature peculiar to it, that you should endeavour by active employment to maintain the independence of your character after having suffered such severe losses, and that in securing this you should on the other hand have provided yourself with an agreeable occupation, in the exercise of which your many sorrows, if not entirely forgotten, are at least less painfully remembered; for this occupation is in harmony with your inclinations, it requires the exercise of thought, like every other artistic employment, and it coincides with your ruling desire to contemplate nature. For this reason it has always been my desire that you might be

able to give this occupation such a direction as shall render its continuance possible at a later period with less personal exertion.

I fully concur with you in the opinion—although the result of earlier experience—that visits are most troublesome when made at a time when we have freed ourselves for a brief interval from some particular occupation; but this is precisely the time which is generally considered the most suitable for a call.

I shall commence my journey from this place in a few days; and as, until near the end of June, I shall have no fixed place of residence, I must beg of you not to write to me earlier than will be sufficient to ensure the reception of a letter about the 25th of June, although I am sorry to remain so long without a letter from you. Address me then in Ottmachau, near Neisse, in Silesia. Farewell.—With sincere and unchangeable friendship, yours,
H.

LETTER XXXIV.

WERNSTADT, JUNE 9, 1824.

Do not take it amiss, dear Charlotte, if I write to you in the Latin character. My eyes have been for a long time in a condition which renders it necessary that I should be very careful, and I have just discovered that the small German character is much more straining than the larger Latin;—owing to their greater distinctness, you will also profit by the exchange. There are, however, some persons to whom this character is displeasing, or at least they do not like to employ it in a correspondence with those whom they love, because they are not accustomed to its use; but I take it that you are as free from capricious, whimsical fancies upon this subject as upon all others. If, however, these characters should prove less agreeable to you than the German, tell me so, and I will return to the use of the latter.

Had I not previously informed you that my second daughter was married, and that she resided in this place, it can be scarcely in any way known to you. I think, however, that, little as I am accustomed to speak in my letters either of those who surround me, or of that which happens to me, I did once mention it, when referring to my family, during my residence in Berlin.

This place is situated scarcely a day's journey from Breslau. It is a small and very inconsiderable town. I have been here a few days, and in a few more shall leave for my estate in Ottmachau, whither I requested you to write to me.

I always think there is something pleasing and agreeable,

both to the imagination and to the affections, in the knowledge that some one is thinking of us with friendly interest in a place or a district which is otherwise strange to us, of the very name of which we are perhaps wholly or almost wholly ignorant. I wish the date of this letter to call forth some such emotion in your mind. I have already frequently addressed you from Ottmachau.

Here we are experiencing warm weather, with wet or at least damp, which easily induces a feeling of melancholy. But I like such weather very much;—under its influences, nature assumes a silence more than usually beneficial in its effects; she appears as if veiled,—by which, however, her features are not obscured, but their form and colour are merely softened. I am always attentive, and especially so when travelling, to the thousand modifications in the appearance of one and the same district produced by atmospheric changes and alterations in the form and density of the clouds. A country may be regarded, in relation to its characteristics, much in the same way as we would contemplate the peculiarities of an individual. Viewed in this light, every modification in its appearance corresponds to a different state of mind, and the features of the former, like those of the latter, may be calm or agitated, mild or harsh, cheerful or sad, indeed even ill-humoured or capricious; and the impression produced in the minds of those who know how to read nature will be in accordance with these features. I can with truth assert that I enjoy the happy talent of always receiving the impression in such a way as to convey a charm to the mind, and to occupy it pleasingly and actively. The state of the weather never proves disagreeable to me, and when it is either dull or terrible I feel it precisely in the same way as I would regard a melancholy or a fearful scene upon the stage of a theatre.

It occurs to me here that you either purposely avoid a theatre, or at least very seldom visit one. It is the same with me, principally because the brilliancy of the lights is

hurtful to my eyes, and my sense of hearing is not sufficiently acute to enable me to understand performers who do not speak well and very distinctly. There is a strolling company here just now, and although there would be no reason to fear the brilliancy of their illumination, and so far from not hearing would rather incur some danger of being deafened from the nearness of the seats to the stage, yet I have not hitherto been to see the performance.

We certainly lose very much if, either willingly or compelled by circumstances, we renounce theatrical representations. Even when the performers have but moderate ability, the representation of a good piece (and upon its goodness all depends) produces an effect much more powerful and exciting than any mere reading, although the reading may be much better executed than the acting. On the other hand, however, there is a great charm in being able at all times to withdraw yourself from crowded assemblies. In my youth, and at a more advanced period of my life, I was vividly impressed with this conviction, and I enjoyed in anticipation the time when I should be sufficiently privileged by years to be able more and more to renounce society; and now that I have attained the consummation of my wishes, I find that early conviction fully confirmed. I have always contemplated old age as a more pleasing, more charming period of life than youth; and now that I have reached this term of life, I find my expectations almost surpassed by the reality. It may be that I am, to a certain extent, more advanced in mind than in years and in my corporeal frame. I am now 57, and one who, like me, has undergone no great bodily fatigue, who has been generally healthy, has lived a life of extreme regularity, and has kept free from passionate emotions, which undermine the constitution, will not find at this age any marked decrease in his physical power. But freedom from all that is calculated to excite or strain the mental powers—repose of the intellect—independence of almost everything which cannot

be produced by activity and resolution of mind,—are all conditions difficult to be attained in early life; and even when present, they but too often arise from a coldness and insensibility of nature, which is more to be regretted than their absence. Yet these are the possessions which chiefly secure to us an internally happy life; and it is for this reason that the assertion frequently made, that old age is more dependent upon circumstances and casualties than earlier life, is not correct. Physically and externally, this is indeed the case, but even here not to so great an extent as is imagined. In old age, our desires and self-created necessities—at least in men who possess well-regulated minds, and have habituated themselves to the exercise of self-command—diminish to a greater extent than the power of satisfying them;—and it brings, to a much greater extent, a far more real happiness, and an independence much more necessary for its existence. Want of resignation and an impatient frame of mind, virtually increase and render us more sensitive to evils of every description. From these two evils old age tends to emancipate us, provided no bad habits have previously become rooted in our minds; for should this be the case, they will indeed administer poison to every period of life. The great boon, however, which is conferred upon us by freedom from all desire and passion—which flows from the greater spiritual freedom of old age, and from the cloudless heaven which advanced years present to the mind,—consists in the fact that meditation becomes purer, stronger, and more continuous—that it pervades the soul to a greater extent, enlarges our intellectual horizon, and fills the mind with the desire to employ itself more and more in the investigations of science and inquiries after truth, to the exclusion of every other wish, and the silencing of every other aspiration.

The contemplative, meditative, and creative life, is the most exalted state of existence; but it is only in old age that it can be fully enjoyed: at an earlier period it is con-

stantly coming into collision with our necessities and active duties; and it is not unfrequently disturbed by them. It could, however, be decidedly incorrect if we were to suppose that the capacity of deriving pleasure from the contemplation of subjects unconnected with life and worldly affairs could not be enjoyed without either extensive knowledge or a high toned mind. When these powers incidentally exist in any man, meditation may embrace a multiplicity of objects, there is of course more variety, and the circle over which reflection ranges is at least apparently extended. But it is precisely those truths which are the most necessary, most holy and comforting, which are comprehended by the simplest common sense; indeed they are not unfrequently more deeply felt, more correctly understood, by such a man, than by one who is distracted by a greater amount of knowledge. These truths possess another peculiarity in addition to the above, for although they require no profound thought for their appreciation, but rather make their own way into the mind, yet there is always something new to be discovered within them—for they are inexhaustible and infinite;—they bind themselves to every period of life, but more naturally to that which stands most closely connected with the time when the final disclosure of all the infinite enigmas which these very truths contain shall be made. A certain amount of activity perishes, it is true, in advanced life,—yet this is but an external and often a false treasure; but greater lucidity of thought, more extended benevolence, purer activity, particularly belong to old age.

I know, dear Charlotte, that you fully agree with me upon all these points, and I flatter myself that it will not prove disagreeable to you, that to a certain extent I have permitted myself to speak of them. Subjects which we would desire to discuss with but few, are precisely those which are best fitted for a correspondence which, freed from matters of business and all external control, is most

pleasing when it is a free and unrestrained interchange of individual thought and sentiment. I hope to receive a letter from you in Ottmachau. With the most sincere attachment, yours,

H.

LETTER XXXV.

TEGEL, 12th Sept. 1824.

Some days have elapsed, dear Charlotte, since my return from Silesia, and it is one of my first occupations to write to you. You will already have received my last letter from Ottmachau.

Autumn promises to be very beautiful, and I am unusually happy at finding myself here once again, with the prospect before me of enjoying the last and best months of the departing year in this place. I love the termination of the year much more than its commencement. At this time we cast a retrospective glance upon all that we have either experienced or performed, and we think ourselves the more secure because the space of time is short in which misfortune can still overtake us. All this is truly but a deception, for in this life a moment is sufficient to produce the greatest changes; but much of happiness as well as of unhappiness is nothing more than deception, and therefore we may be thankful for that also which this quiet season brings. I am certainly very free from self-solicitude:—not that I think myself less exposed to accidents than others, or that I do not fear anything which can happen to man, but I have cultivated the sentiment from an early period of life, that man must ever hold himself prepared to undergo all that destiny may bring. Yet we cannot banish the thought that life is as an ocean through which we conduct our bark more or less successfully, and then it is natural to contemplate the short distance with more satisfaction than the long voyage. It has always appeared to me, that viewing life as a whole, as a work to be accomplished, affords to the contemplator the most powerful motive to induce him to meet death with indifference; whilst, on the other hand, if we

regard life merely in separate portions, we shall then have no other object than how to associate one happy day with another, as if this could continue for an eternity; and nothing can then be more void of consolation than to find ourselves standing by that boundary at which the thread of life will be suddenly broken.

The trees begin already to assume those variegated hues which so adorn the autumnal landscape, and which to some extent compensate for the fresh green of early spring. The little spot in which I reside at present is admirably calculated to exhibit all those beauties which are displayed by the varying foliage of majestic trees of different kinds during the course of the changing seasons. Old trees cast their broad shadows around the house and encircle it as with a green fan; beyond the field, avenues branch off in various directions, and single fruit-trees are scattered here and there through the garden and vineyard: there is a thick and dark coppice in the park, and the lake is surrounded by woods, whilst its islands are fringed with bushes and trees. I have a particular fondness for trees, and neither like them to be cut down nor transplanted. There is something sad in the removal of a poor tree from the spot in which he has made himself a home for many years, to plant him in new earth and in a strange place, from which, however much his new residence may disagree with him, he cannot be removed, but slowly declining must there await his end. Trees, above all objects, pourtray to the imagination an unspeakable amount of aspiring desire; for although they stand fast bound and confined to earth, yet they elevate their summits as far as they are able above the ground to which they are rooted. I know nothing in nature so symbolic of elevated aspiration. Man with all his apparent freedom is in truth very similarly circumstanced, however wide his excursions may prove, he is yet confined to but a point of space: sometimes he cannot leave even this point to the slightest extent,—and this is often the case with women;—

the same little spot may serve as his cradle and his grave; or if he departs, desire or necessity brings him back from time to time; and should he remain continually absent, his thoughts and wishes are directed towards the home of his earliest recollections.

I am happy to think, dear Charlotte, that you enjoy in your garden, at least to some extent, the pleasures of a country residence. I well know how much attached you are to such a life, and how you treasure every joy which is connected with it. The approaching termination of autumn and the commencement of winter renders my employment very disagreeable. My eyes are certainly very much improved by the continued use of appropriate remedies; they yet, however, require much care, and I do not strain them by candle-light. This shortens the day very much, and when we subtract the time spent in domestic life, in paying visits, together with that consumed by interruptions of various kinds, and lastly that occupied by the real business of life, but very little of the day remains.

I may truly say, that the more closely and exclusively I continue to devote myself to study and meditation, the more I lose myself in these pursuits, the more I lose all taste and inclination for every other occupation. The events of life have not the slightest interest for me; they pass by like momentary phenomena, which yield nothing either to my intellect or heart. I contract more and more the circle of my acquaintance. Those with whom I enjoyed the most charming intercourse at an earlier period of my life are dead, and I have always regarded the formation of such social intercourse as a happy accident of which we should avail ourselves, when an opportunity offers, rather than as a necessity which we should seek to gratify. On the other hand, the field of knowledge and research is unbounded, and ever presents new charms. It occupies all our hours, and our only desire is to be able to increase their number. I can with truth assert, that I often pass

whole days in inward meditation, without stealing a moment for such subjects, except when they occur as mere passing thoughts.

Natural History has never attracted me. I am deficient in the power of fixing my attention upon external characters. Antiquarian researches, however, charmed me at an early period of my life, and it is this which now constitutes my real study. Man, at an earlier period of his existence, showed more exaltedness and simplicity, more profoundness and freedom from artificiality in his thoughts and emotions, and also in the language in which he clothed them. We certainly cannot arrive at the full and perfect appreciation of this truth by any other means than by such an amount of erudition as is only to be acquired by painful application, which robs us of much time from our more mechanical occupations. But this has its peculiar charm, or at least the difficulty may be easily conquered if we are accustomed to patient research and labour. The books of the Old Testament belong to the purest, strongest, and most beautiful of those voices which have reached us from hoary antiquity; and we can never sufficiently thank our language that they should have lost so little either of force or truth in the translation. I have often contemplated with pleasure the fact that it was possible to collect so much that is great, beautiful, and various, as we find in the Bible,—that is, in the books of the Old and New Testament. Even if this were the only book in the hands of the people, as is the case with us, they would possess in it an entire analysis of human nature, whether in relation to its poetry, philosophy, or history; and all so perfect, that it would be difficult to find a single intellect or mental disposition which could not find a corresponding accord in its contents. Besides, it contains but little so incomprehensible as to be beyond a common average amount of understanding. The man of greater acquirements only penetrates farther into its interior sense, but no one can turn away unsatisfied from its contemplation.

I shall remain here the greater part of this and the following month, previous to my departure for Berlin, and shall then spend but a few weeks in that city: upon this you may depend with certainty in reference to your letters. I shall most probably travel during the months of November and December, as last autumn, which will terminate in a residence of some weeks duration in Burgörner; but this is not certain, and the time still less so. I will write farther upon this subject before I leave. I am never incited by any active, positive desire to change my place of residence; any wish I may feel to move, is but barely sufficient to counteract my innate tendency to remain in one and the same place. Thus my travels and changes of residence seldom arise from original inclination, but are mostly the result of necessity. Farewell, dear Charlotte.—With the most sincere feeling, yours,

H.

LETTER XXXVI.

BURGÖRNER, 13th Nov. 1824.

Your letter of the 26th of last month has afforded me as much pleasure as your letters always produce. It is extremely kind of you to value so highly the interest I take, and shall certainly never cease to take, in the continuation of your autobiography. You are perfectly right in attributing this to the interest which I feel in yourself, and to the pleasure which is awakened in me, not directly by the description of external events, but by the representation of internal states of mind;—these are the sources from which my interest flows.

If it be true that events which have long since vanished in the past, no longer influence by their presence the object of our sympathies, yet we read of all that once concerned this object with a feeling as if it still belonged to the present; it is as if it were even now influenced by these circumstances—as if those sources of joy and sorrow still affected it;—and in truth it is really so. However great the power of time may be, yet it never entirely obliterates the recollection of past events; and although the mind may have long remained unoccupied by the emotions immediately produced by those events, yet it is time itself, with all its changes, which has given that which may be regarded as true existence, and which may justly be said to be independent even of time.

I do not mean to assert that emotions themselves continue to exist in an unchanged form; for in this respect past and present always stand distinguished from each other: it is only the capacity to perceive the one or the other which remains unchanged. But the sum-total of all

the emotions which have ever agitated the mind form so close a tissue, that the long-gone-by joy and the long-passed-away pain still move the soul, although they may not be able to exercise any direct influence upon it. This is equally true of the emotions called forth by interest in another, as it is in our own individual sentiments.

You are remarkably successful, dear Charlotte, in describing all that relates to the development of your mind, even as far back as the earliest years of youth and childhood. All that you say of these times carries the reader not only into your external sphere, but your very thoughts and feelings are made known to him;—no single feature of your narrative elevates itself with undue importance above the rest, but each stands depicted in its true and natural connexion and position. This capacity which you have always enjoyed and preserved, indicates a larger amount of contemplative power than is usually bestowed upon us,—although indeed women are generally more gifted in this respect than men. Feminine occupations, their physical as well as their inherent intellectual tendencies, lead to contemplation and reflection; but it is seldom that we find combined with this tendency, so high an amount of lucid thought and distinct perception as you possess. The too contemplative nature is not unfrequently obscure and confused, for distinct comprehension is primarily a property of the senses; but your narrative clearly proves that your prior state of mind, at every period which memory can recal, stands so clearly and distinctly before you, that you have nothing to do but to copy from your soul. You have no necessity to call upon imagination to fill up any void, neither is it necessary to leave any feature of the narrative confused or indistinct, but all stands entire and in the perfection of truth. The great practice which you have had in the art of composition,—which is seldom enjoyed

by women to so great an extent,*—has also assisted you, and from these several causes it happens that your narrative presents a living picture of external and internal life, so arranged that the former is portrayed with definiteness and precision, only that the latter may be the more lucidly illustrated, the more decidedly characterized.

You speak of blame, which you think you may have incurred to a certain extent by what you have written. I do not know why you should just now be led to anticipate it; I cannot conceive what you mean. I have not observed anything in this part which merits my disapprobation. I thought I had already expressed my opinion in reference to your description and remarks upon the characters of your long since deceased parents; they contained nothing which could justly be considered objectionable. Whenever we turn to the contemplation either of characters or of actions with the wish to delineate them faithfully, we must do it entirely and without reserve. Good points might perhaps be portrayed more prominently, but not so truly, if we were to attempt to keep back every peculiarity which, according to this or that opinion, might cast a slight shade upon them. The existence of sentiments of honour and love, particularly when that of thankfulness is associated with them, happily do not depend upon a careful, anxious balancing of the merits or weaknesses of those to whom they are paid, but are founded upon such original ties as exist in parental and filial love, or upon a variety of emotions which we prize and esteem; and they always remain the same even when we detect little defects—nay even great faults—in those towards whom they are directed. That tribute of honour which the child owes to the parent, and every man to those of greater intellectual power than himself in contact with whom he may be placed, and which every well-regulated and amiable disposition so readily pays, is much more fre-

* This is retained only to explain a subsequent passage.

quently founded upon a presumed worth than upon a distinct and actual experience of its existence, and it is given to a certain something which shines forth in the carriage, mein, gestures, and whole character, but which perhaps has not once attained full development. Knowing how easily humanity may err—how difficult it is to preserve purity of action through all the complicated circumstances of life, it is most consoling and tranquillizing to feel that love and honour may be accorded even to those who are known to be weak, and who have not always kept themselves clear from errors. If we know such to be the sentiments of our hearts—if we know ourselves to be free from that cold and calm severity which first weighs both failures and excellencies before it will pay the tribute of love and esteem,—we may speak of honoured and beloved persons with the greatest freedom and without the slightest self-reproach. Yet I am but little given to blame the failings or conduct of others, and almost as little inclined to praise them. Regarding all things historically, and attending both to their external form and internal nature, we can seldom say decidedly how they may have originated, and still less can we approve or condemn them. So it has ever been, and thus will it ever be. Moral worth can only belong to the sentiment which accompanies the action,—and this conscience alone can praise or blame. Every man must be and is his own judge: conscience then pronounces, more loudly and painfully than any external voice can do, her disapprobation whenever it is merited. It is the same with praise: whoever receives it would do well to regard it rather as a free gift than as the reward of merit. This may be clearly deduced from the fact, that we should rarely praise ourselves to the same extent as we are praised by others; but it is more agreeable both to hear and bestow praise, and we the more easily permit it to pass beyond its just limits, if, when occasion requires, we do not hesitate also to censure, although with gentleness and softness, rather than with any

degree of bitterness. For this reason we must not think too highly of praise. I am accustomed to consider it, whenever it is bestowed upon me, as an agreeable tribute, which I do not accurately examine with a view to determine how just it may be;—all that we have to do in such cases is to take care that we are not injured by it. Farewell for to-day.—With the same unchangeable attachment,
yours, H.

DETACHED THOUGHTS.

The past contains abundant sources of joy and sorrow, of self-satisfaction and repentance:—there we contended against ourselves, against fate, and the designs of others,—and there we conquered and overthrew them. Whatever is found there, has truly existed. Painful events have left an impression as indelible as a scar; joyful emotions have become as inseparable from us as the intuitions of the soul. Moreover, the past is free from all anxiety for the future.

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There are no states of mind so well calculated to lead us safely through life, as resignation and contentment. If we do not possess sufficient firmness to endure privation and even suffering, we can never consider ourselves as armed against painful emotions; indeed we must attribute to ourselves, or at least to the morbid sensitiveness of our nature, every harsh or disagreeable emotion we may have to suffer.

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There is nothing in the moral world to which we cannot attain, if we are but actuated by a proper motive. We can do whatever we please with ourselves, but we must not desire too much influence over others.

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To oppose ourselves to mankind and to destiny, is not the noblest disposition of mind to possess; neither is it that which promises the greatest amount of tranquillity and cheerfulness. We should rather strive to accommodate ourselves to circumstances, to regard all that destiny bestows upon us as a gift, being careful not to desire more than we possess, and, least of all, not to become dissatisfied because all our desires are not gratified.

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Forebodings and presentiments, as they are called, are singular mental phenomena. Sometimes the event accords with the presentiment, whilst at other times there is no correspondence between them. Yet we should not regard either the one or the other as mere accidental occurrences because the foreboding sometimes remains unfulfilled;—neither should we refuse to admit that they have truly indicated the future, whenever the event corresponds. It is the same with these as with every other state of mind which is not based upon intuitive conviction. Mere self-conviction may deceive; we may be led to regard as a presentiment that which is really no such thing; whilst, on the other hand, we may sometimes mistake the true presentiment, and regard it as a false one. Upon this point we shall never attain to any objective certainty; there can be no unfailing external sign to accompany the recognition of truth. Weak presentiments often occur to us; they may either arise spontaneously, or they may be vague and baseless states of mind, induced either by hope or fear. When of the former kind, we may confidently reckon upon them; but not so if they spring from the latter source. The wisest course to pursue is by no means to permit ourselves to be misled by them, but always to remember, when they present themselves, that probably they are false, and when they are unfavourable, to act as if we were certain of their truth. H.

LETTER XXXVII.

BERLIN, December 1824.

A few days have elapsed, dear Charlotte, since my return. It is one of my first occupations to inform you of it, and to write to you, in accordance with the dear old custom, which I know will give you as much pleasure as it confers upon myself.

We are approaching the termination of a year. It is a period which has always appeared to me more fitted than its commencement for meditating upon ourselves and those who are connected with us. I look back upon the past year, and thank you most warmly and sincerely for the constant sympathy you have bestowed upon me throughout its course. You may rest assured that to the fullest extent I know how to value the deep-felt, unchangeable attachment you have continually shown towards me; it has produced a similar emotion towards you in my own mind, and you may always depend upon my sincerest sympathy, and reckon upon my best advice and assistance. Pardon me for this expressive repetition;—I know that it is not particularly necessary, since you already know it from my earlier and oft-repeated assurances;—yet I willingly repeat my sentiments upon this point, for I know well that it is not always easy to comprehend me; I am well aware that I do not express my desires for the welfare of others in the same way as most men would do;—but as I now am, I shall always remain; indeed I do not know how to change myself in this respect, even if I entertained the wish. I repeat, therefore, all I have previously uttered, because I feel that, to a slight extent, one might easily wander from the truth (although this expression is somewhat too strong), and because I desire, at the termination

of the year, openly and simply, but in all truth, to assure you that you never will have just occasion to doubt the unchangeable sincerity of my attachment; that no impression—not even the youthful one you made upon me—has ceased to exist; and that the sentiments of esteem, thankfulness, and trustful devotion which you have uninterruptedly expressed, truly belong to those circumstances which heighten the happiness of my life. Cherish, therefore, dear Charlotte, such hopes only as are of a cheerful nature for the approaching year.—Yours,

H.

LETTER XXXVIII.

BERLIN, 31st January 1825.

The arrival of a letter before the usual time will occasion you some surprise, dear Charlotte. But I am unwell;—I am suffering from a pretty severe cough with fever and toothache; these keep me from my usual occupations, and I turn with pleasure to my correspondence, and more particularly in writing to you, to find a soothing and cheering employment. I am one of the most patient of invalids; indeed I cannot always bring myself to regard sickness as an evil. You will say, this is enough to prove that I have never been unwell, or at least but seldom;—and you are right. Yet there are many persons who complain of every slight illness, and of such trivial indispositions as are at worst but mere inconveniencies. Sickness always brings to me a peculiar tranquillity and gentleness of feeling. I do not mean to say I am very much otherwise when well;—but the occupations of health, especially in men, are accompanied with a zeal and eagerness which more or less excite and fatigue the mind. This disappears when we become unwell; we feel that our activity is suspended, and we look for no event until we become convalescent.—But do not give yourself the slightest uneasiness on my account; my illness is quite unimportant, and will certainly pass away within a few days; it is merely the result of a cold taken during an unavoidable exposure. I felt at the time, and on the very spot, the commencement of the evil. My eyes—you often think most kindly of them—are much improved, and I am not suffering any inconvenience from them this winter;—this I ascribe to my great care, and to the use in writing of the Latin character.

I have already sincerely thanked you for your last letter.

I have often perused it;—every word which it contains gives me the sincerest, the most heartfelt pleasure, and often have I thanked you in silence for it. You possess a rare and natural gift in being able to express your emotions with simplicity and truth;—it is this faculty which gives such force to all you write. I always desired, indeed I was always confident, that as you came to know me better, you would become more and more convinced of the sincerity of my sympathy—the unchangeableness of my emotions towards you. This full appreciation of my feelings I trust I have obtained. The present affords me an opportunity to express this clearly to you, for at the termination of a year our emotions naturally flow towards those who are dear to us, and we eagerly connect them with each other. Even in ordinary life I pay much attention to periods of time, and the commencement of a new year is to me no common epoch. I suit all my actions to time, and permit it to rule over my conduct.

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That time passes away, and that it should be intellectually realized, is the greatest and most important concern of human life. If we were but thoroughly convinced of this, we should become very indifferent to pleasure or pain, prosperity or adversity; for what is pain or pleasure, adversity or prosperity, but the rapid flight of a portion of time, of which no trace remains but in the mental improvement we may have collected from it? Time is the most important thing in human life—for what is joy after its departure?—and the most consolatory—for pain, when time has fled, is no more. Time is the wheel-track in which we roll on towards eternity, which conducts us to the Incomprehensible. There is a perfecting power connected with its progress, and this operates upon us the more beneficially when we duly estimate it, listen to its voice, and do not waste it, but regard it as the highest finite good, in which all finite things are resolved.

* * * * * *

I think very highly of your industry; it is most creditable to you, and it is rewarded in the conscious independence which you have again secured, after having suffered losses so great and so honourable. It is for this reason that all you tell me of your occupation, which is in itself very pleasing, interests me in the highest degree.

* * * * * *

I prize industry above all things: it is especially commendable in women. The occupations which they most generally pursue possess this attraction, this peculiar charm,—they leave the person occupied free to use her perceptive and reflective faculties. It is to this source I trace the fact, that we generally find in women, even in such as have enjoyed no particular advantages of education, a more sensitive and better constituted spirit and a greater depth of mind, than is generally possessed by men, although in point of knowledge the former are to some extent inferior to the latter. Certainly the more frequent sadness and susceptibility of women proceeds from the same source; for the oftener the mind is accustomed to retire within its own deep solitudes, the harsher will the contact with every external circumstance prove;—but this is a disadvantage which may be easily endured.

It is a habit of never-failing utility to make of one's self a constant object of meditation. We may also assert with equal truth, that the mass of mankind are either utterly ignorant of themselves, or at least do not rightly understand their own nature. Both assertions are correct,—yet we can never know so much of any other man—we cannot understand in any other person, the secret connexion which exists between thoughts and desires, or the origin of every inclination and every resolution: such information we can obtain only from self-investigation. On the other hand, however much we may desire it, we cannot exercise impartiality towards ourselves, for the mind is both judge and the object to be judged, and we are thus as it were

entangled in partiality. For this reason nothing pleases me more than to be judged in the freest, most unreserved manner by those around me. In this way we become enlightened, we hear remarks made on our conduct we should never have applied to ourselves;—and there will always be truth of one kind or other in them, if they be not wilfully perverted.

This is the last day of the month. You intended, dear Charlotte, to have sent me, before its termination, a new part of your autobiography. I rejoice in this anticipation; but now it cannot arrive, for it is too late in the day;—perhaps you did not properly calculate the time of the post, which may have been delayed by the season of the year and the state of the roads. I hope and desire soon to receive it;—in any case I entreat you to write to me by return of post, and again after the 15th of the month. As I have written to you this day, I do not know whether I shall write again on the 12th or later, but you will certainly receive another letter from me sometime during the month. Farewell. I repeat, do not let my indisposition cause you the slightest uneasiness.—With the same unchangeable attachment, yours,
H.

LETTER XXXIX.

BERLIN, Feb. 8, 1825.

I have received the journal, dear Charlotte, together with the short letter, and the more circumstantial one which quickly followed it. I should have written to you to-day as usual, but I have just received a visit which detained me, and now there is but one quarter of an hour remaining before the departure of the post. I send, however, partly to say that my health is reëstablished, and partly because you expressed the desire to receive a letter quickly from me.

I am extremely sorry that my last should have vexed you, and it is a duty incumbent upon me to try to calm your mind; but I protest most solemnly that no one could have occasioned you pain more innocently. It did not occur to me that you, who have known me so long, could have so far misunderstood me as to receive in so literal a sense (you must forgive the expression), what I had written with a freedom which only the deepest intimacy and the highest confidence could have suggested. You have in your letters always allotted me a high place in your estimation, and have constantly entreated me to guide and instruct you. Had I supposed that my words could have displeased you, I must have abandoned the conviction that you know how to appreciate my sentiments, which have always been, as in that letter, full of affection, sympathy, and interest. Ought you in justice to have permitted yourself to be so vexed? Would it not have been better immediately to have written to me? Your meaning was good, but your words do not please me. Dear Charlotte, you may always depend upon my constancy; do receive this conviction with a trustful heart, and take once

for all the assurance that I never wish to occasion you any sorrow, and because I do not wish I cannot.

You must have received a second letter from me before yours reached me. I know that it was written in a most affectionate style, and you must certainly have observed this; but at the time it was written I was ignorant that the letter which I had just forwarded would prove displeasing to you, and this may have again vexed you, which would give me much pain, and I am now sorry that I have written it. Your answer must be on the way;—when I have received it, I will write again and express myself more fully. I must conclude for to-day. If you still entertain any sorrow in your heart, let it disappear for ever.—With the most sincere and lively attachment, yours devotedly,

H.

LETTER XL.

BERLIN, Feb. 12, 1825.

Your letter, dearest Charlotte, of the 6th of this month, has afforded me the greatest pleasure. I certainly was by no means in a passion with you,—or at all events it was but for a moment. My first care was to endeavour to tranquillize you, as you will have already learnt from my short letter. I then became uncertain what course I should next follow;—possibly my desire to avoid giving you pain might have induced me to yield to you contrary to my convictions:—all this your affectionate letter has happily prevented. I repeat, that it has given me great pleasure, and I heartily thank you for it. If you remain always as good—and I know you will—you will recognise only what is true and just; and if you do this, you will fulfil that which I promised myself at the commencement of our correspondence, and will render still greater that pleasure which I thankfully acknowledge to have already received. Now, I will act precisely as you desire. I will forget your last letter, and will never again allude to it;—I will burn it, so that not a syllable may exist to diminish the pleasure which I derive from your other letters, and at the same time I will retain my former freedom, and speak distinctly and without anxiety or restraint whatever I may think best for us. It is natural that I should decide, and that you should acquiesce; but it must and shall ever remain for you to determine whether or not you will grant me this privilege.

My health is perfectly reëstablished, and I am following out my usual occupations;—this particularly pleases me, for I can with truth assert that this constitutes my true life. These occupations embrace a number of self-chosen

subjects, and always such as embody general principles; and as I have devoted the greater part of my life to such, they have given that serious turn to my mind—that tendency to dwell upon ideas—to meditate, by which it is evidently characterized. I have reduced all that surrounds me, everything with which I come in contact, to a certain system. I by no means think that this system is in all respects perfect; on the other hand, it contains nothing that is not from time to time contemplated and reconsidered,—and this constantly leads to the discovery of an error, somewhere or other, to be amended; but so long as I possess any influence, I cannot permit anything around me to be carried on in a way which I conceive to be either incorrect or improper. I can then exhibit a reason for every action, and this consequently gives me a foundation upon which I can proceed.

There is nothing more objectionable to me than to grope about in the dark, or to change my ideas through mere caprice. Of course it is not always possible to base everything upon its true foundation,—neither can we expect to form our resolutions always in the wisest manner; but we can approximate to this: we can reduce all things, even the most inconsiderable, to system and order, and we can compel ourselves to act in accordance with this order. Not to permit ourselves to follow this plan or the other as we may be swayed by capricious desire or disinclination, is to pursue a line of conduct favourable both to character and external circumstances; besides, it is by no means right that so uncertain a state of existence should be permitted to restrain the soarings of the intellect, or should set limits to the emanations of the heart. Intellect moves with much greater decision in a definite course, in which it finds a fixed object, and the necessary amount of support, and our perceptive faculties also are much more vigorous when they proceed from well-considered and accurate ideas.

The new part of your narrative, recently sent, has again

given me much pleasure. However, this day I shall not take any further notice of it; but I assure you that I very much desire to receive the continuation, and I entreat you to work at it as your time may permit. I shall expect a letter from you in a few days, and I wish you to answer this, so that it may be dispatched by the 26th of this month. Now farewell, dear Charlotte. Rest assured that I often think of you, and always with the most sincere interest. I hope the mild weather we have lately experienced may have exercised a beneficial influence upon your health. The older we grow, the more averse do we become to sudden changes and extremes of weather.—With the same unchangeable sentiments of attachment, yours,

H.

LETTER XLI.

BERLIN, 8th March 1825.

The description of your life and domestic circumstances from the year 1786 has given me, dear Charlotte, a much greater pleasure than I can express. It is a period of your life which naturally passed away without the occurrence of any very particular event; but it is from your extraordinary power of depicting conditions of mind that the interest principally arises, and it is these conditions which render the events themselves attractive, whether they prepare, accompany, or originate from them. But there is no subject of contemplation more charming than the nature of a blooming girl of the age you then were. At that time I was nineteen years of age, and had never left my paternal home. I lost my father at an earlier period—when I was but twelve years old he died of an accidental illness,—judging from his previous state of health he might have lived much longer. You must be about four years younger than myself; but I now remember that I am not accurately acquainted with the year of your birth. Send me this information once again. I always consider it a matter of importance to know accurately the age of those I like, especially when they are female friends. I entertain peculiar opinions upon this subject, and prefer women of more advanced years to the more youthful:—even external charms in my opinion continue to exist much longer than is generally allowed to be the case, and those mental qualities which particularly delight us are decidedly heightened by years.

I never desired at any period of my life to hold a near position either to a girl or woman much younger than myself;—least of all could I have married under such circumstances. I am convinced that such marriages are not

usually productive of happiness: they generally lead the man to treat his wife as a child; and whenever there exists much discrepancy in point of age it is impossible that that freedom of intercourse should take place which tends to the mental elevation and happiness of both parties, or that that pure stream of thought and sentiment should flow between them which peculiarly constitutes all that is blissful in the intercourse betwixt the two sexes. Equality of mind is indispensably necessary in the married state, and the man can only expect to find happiness in this condition when the wife, as far as the powers of her nature will permit, and yet with the full independence of womanhood, yields to his opinions and recognises his will as her own—— But I have departed from the subject of your narrative.

It was a very peculiar—but in the innocence of a progressing mind not yet unfolded to itself—a very natural and praiseworthy state of heart which led you most ardently to desire to possess a friend, to the exclusion of every other wish. In this we recognise clearly the difference between love and friendship;—both equally consist of that life of the soul, under the influence of which two persons meeting each other, and appearing individually to give up their existence the one to the other, yet receive it back again in a brighter and purer form. A man must possess some external object to which he can attach himself, upon which he may work with all the collected powers of his existence. But although this inclination is common to all, yet it is the privilege of the sensitive and highly-cultivated soul alone to feel the desire, the aspiration after true friendship and true love. Minds less delicately constituted, or blunted by the world, form but transitory and changing attachments; they never attain to the tranquillity which results from a perfect exchange of sympathy. Viewed in reference to each other, love and friendship, under every form and circumstance, differ in this respect, that the former is always coloured with sensuality; but this does not militate against

its excellence, for even a sensual inclination may comprehend within itself the greatest purity. Love originates in the very soul, and changes the nature of all things subjected to its unspotted brightness. In young girls who have never once recognised the emotion of love, much less arrived at the consciousness of its existence in themselves, it is nevertheless this emotion which lies veiled under the guise of friendship; these two feelings are not yet clearly and definitely separated, but as womanhood approaches, every emotion passes insensibly into that of love. Even friendship, as it exists between two persons of the same sex, is at this period of life more energetic, more passionate, more yielding and sacrificing; and although at a more advanced age friendship may lead us to perform the same actions, yet at an early stage of life it manifests itself differently; the tone of the emotion is more glowing, the soul is more thoroughly penetrated, and it shines through it with a clearer and warmer light. This was certainly your case at that time, dear Charlotte, in reference to your friend.

I desire very much that you should continue your narrative;—I perceive no difficulties standing in the way of the completion of the first part; but after a time, serious events, and to some extent sad and heavy trials, have to be narrated. Here, dear Charlotte, I leave it wholly for your own emotions to decide whether you can proceed further with the subject. It must depend completely upon yourself whether you can bear to awaken memories which, although they belong to a time long since gone by, may nevertheless still give you pain. Take care of yourself,—believe indeed that this is necessary for my mental tranquillity. I am often much afraid that you exert yourself too much in your occupations;—I would fain have it otherwise. Now farewell, dear Charlotte, and believe me yours unchangeably and devotedly,

H.

LETTER XLII.

BERLIN, 22d March 1825.

I seat myself to commence writing to you, dear Charlotte, with peculiar pleasure, and most sincerely do I hope that this sheet will find you well and cheerful. The firmest constitution, exposed to such remarkable weather as we are now experiencing, might easily suffer;—it appears as if winter had withdrawn entirely, that spring might arrive. Hitherto, thank God, my health has received no injury, and I think of going to Tegel, if not before Easter, at least immediately after.

If we had to wait a whole year before the trees became green, it would be a time of sweet expectancy, as the hope of a good which is unfailing ever proves, because it arises from one which is in itself constant and enduring. Pleasures which derive their origin from the contemplation of nature and natural changes, possess this peculiar feature, that they exercise a moral influence over the heart which thankfully receives them.

There is a something great and wonderful in the invariable regularity of nature, as manifested in all her operations, even in her most ordinary phenomena, such as the daily rising and setting of the sun. This regularity, I say, combined with the beneficent influences which she pours forth upon mankind, gives to every emotion called forth by her influence a degree of gentleness both tranquillizing and elevating. In our rough northern climate we must indeed purchase the transition from autumn to spring with the bitter sensations of winter; we must patiently await the dawn of better things;—but yet this great change has its advantages, for a powerful and deep impression is made upon us when we pass from that gloom which always ac-

companies winter, into the mild cheerfulness of spring. This we truly appreciate after a residence of some years in southern climes, where the winter is truly a spring, and it is impossible to distinguish more than three seasons. There, summer is indicated by its great heat, autumn by its fruits, and the remaining months of the year are characterized by the beautiful fresh verdure of the meadows and grassy ridges, and by the many ever-green trees which put forth more leaves, during which time neither cold nor disagreeable weather is experienced;—there we pass through winter into spring without remarking any particular change; but we lose entirely all those truly heavenly impressions which the changes of the seasons make upon the soul. It is in nature alone that I note the course of time. At one period men were accustomed to mark the course of the seasons by changes in their mode of life; but this is not the case with me, for with the exception of an occasional change in my place of residence, my habits remain the same at every period of the year. This uniformity in my life naturally results from my going out so little in winter, and the constancy with which I pursue my occupations; for except from three to five in the afternoon, from eight to eleven in the morning, and at night, you would always find me, dear Charlotte, sitting thoughtfully by my writing-table in my study; and as the few visits I make are paid in the above-mentioned intervals of time, there are scarcely any exceptions to the rule.

The further we advance in life, the more are we charmed by serious reflexion, if we are capable of it. We may indeed say that it is the only occupation which can then delight us. It is a pleasure which increases by habit; one thought gives birth to another, and new fields of meditation arise out of half-formed deductions or mere surmises. We do not thereby—for indeed I have no desire to bestow unconditional praise on this kind of solitary thought—we do not thereby become more attractive to others; on the

contrary, we rather separate ourselves from them, we repulse certain things from us, we feel generally a desire and a necessity of making ourselves and our own modes of thinking predominant, and where we can discern no opportunity for their introduction we quickly draw back even when our doing so is undeserving of approval;—we feel convinced that we can only move forward in one fixed track, and therefore desire that those who would accompany us should follow the self-same route. All this may be disadvantageous, but everything that is human has its peculiar inconveniencies, and the contemplative soul, retired within its own sphere of thought and entertaining no wish to leave it, recognises and obtains such an equivalent for all these disadvantages, that it would never desire on their account alone to sever itself from this habit;—indeed when we have once obtained the means by which an otherwise well-constituted and meditative mind may tranquillize itself, it is not our duty to separate ourselves from them, for there always proceeds a something from every self-chosen train of thought, commenced in accordance with our own resolutions, which operates both widely and influentially; and unless we are free and independent, the unrestrained employment of our intellectual activity cannot be enjoyed.

You will have learned from my letter of the 8th of this month, dear Charlotte, with how much pleasure and interest I have perused the new part of your autobiography. Since that time it has frequently occupied my thoughts. It happens now much less frequently than formerly, that young persons are compelled to marry those who are by no means the objects of their choice. This leads me to think that the world is become better, more gentle and more just. We then for the first time learn to elevate ourselves above external circumstances and conditions, when we come to know how to secure internal happiness; and although it sometimes happens that, to obtain this end, false and decep-

tive courses are pursued, yet on the whole much is gained by this justice and mildness, by this recognition of the freedom of the person to decide, whose future life is involved in the decision.

Under compulsory circumstances, nothing can be worse than the adoption of a resolution similar to that formed by your friend,—namely, to enter upon a new engagement without renouncing a previously-formed connexion. When this is the case, although the purest sacrifice may be made, and the greatest morality observed, yet it is an unnatural state of heart—it is a union which can never receive that spiritual blessing without which nothing thrives. You think that the second marriage did not secure to her the expected amount of happiness—and this can scarcely ever fail to be the case. The first charm of an early love, formed in accordance with one's desires, which does not hastily pass away, but unites with every emotion, giving happiness to all, is blunted by deferred hope; it forms for itself a picture in the distance, which after a time ceases to correspond with truth. Union with a man under circumstances wanting in all that belongs to the married state necessarily implants a thorn in the heart, which continues to exist even when the grave has received him, and when he no longer has it in his power to excite disquieting emotions. Thus that internal tranquillity fails, without which no happiness can exist.

No more for to-day. I will soon write again, dear Charlotte.—With the sincerest sympathy, unchangeably yours,
H.

LETTER XLIII.

BERLIN, April 6, 1825.

I have derived very great pleasure from the perusal of your circumstantial letter of the 20th of the preceding month, and thank you most sincerely for it. I rode out on Thursday the 24th, and thought that upon my return I should find a letter from you, and truly when I came back there it lay upon the table. I recognise very thankfully this punctuality on your part and this attention to my wishes.

It makes me very happy to think that the time has nearly elapsed when so much exertion will be required on your part, for although your income is increased by it, yet I fear for your health; and besides it gives me yet greater pain to know that you are so much harassed and annoyed, when I would so willingly see you possessed of more leisure time, much as I honour labour and active exertion. I shall receive with the greatest interest your next letter, and with it the abstract of your income and expenditure; and taking so lively, so deep an interest in this subject, I will make myself fully acquainted both with its general and particular statements, and will know how you are circumstanced in this respect—whether your position is one of certainty or not. It would be a never-failing source of gratification to me, if I could but make such propositions as would be calculated to insure you a greater amount of ease and leisure than you now enjoy, and should at the same time prove agreeable to you. This may happen. Although labour is pleasing, yet leisure is just as beneficial, just as capable of producing happiness. This is particularly applicable to you, who willingly lead a life of sentiment and reflection, and the naturally thoughtful and sensitive turn

of your disposition, the more than usually good education you have received, as well as the position in life you were originally destined to hold, render you well qualified to enjoy and to derive benefit from unconstrained leisure, which a man even of the highest rank can never obtain, but a female of the better class may always command. Such are my wishes, and such are my intentions. I have mentioned them in that spirit of perfect confidence, dear Charlotte, which you have permitted me, nay have even requested me to exercise, and without any circumlocution. I am conscious of an earnest desire for your welfare, and of the sincerity of my sentiments towards you; and I know that the line of conduct I pursue is right and good. If you should entertain a different view it will not astonish me, for our opinions vary according to the point from which we form them. It only increases my thankfulness, affection, and deep respect, to know that you give way to the views and opinions of him towards whom your sentiments incline, and that you yield to him, which is always the characteristic of a genuine, noble, female nature. It has therefore given me the greatest pleasure to find that in this respect also you attend to my wish—in short, to speak it out, that you *obey** me; for I repeat to you without disguise, that, however incomprehensible it may appear, I greatly love not merely that which this word denotes, but the word itself and all that is connected with it, and that not only the absence of self-will and the existence of an obedient spirit, but also the willing manifestations of this disposition, constitute, in my opinion, one of the most amiable features of elevated spiritual womanhood—of a nature which holds its merit and dignity in such conscious security as to know that by submission it cannot part with any one of its excellencies.

* It could not prove difficult for me willingly to yield to this singular whim on the part of so highly honoured a friend.

You wish to know where I lived during 1786 and the years following. At that time I was residing in Berlin, where my mother lived during the winter. I remained there in the summer also, with my younger brother and a private tutor. We generally rode over on the Sunday to Tegel. I continued to reside in the city until the autumn of 1788, when with my brother and the same tutor I went to Frankfort on the Oder, where there was a University at that time. I remained there until Easter 1789, when with my tutor, but unaccompanied by my brother, I went to Göttingen. There my tutor left me, and for the first time in my life I found myself, at the age of twenty-two, alone. Thus you saw me in 1789 in Pymont, and I always think of that event with the greatest pleasure. The person who was with me at that time was not at all related to me, but was an acquaintance of my own choosing.

At Easter 1790 my brother followed me to Göttingen, but shortly after Midsummer I travelled to Paris with the deceased Campe. He had been my first tutor, and from him I learnt in my third year to read and write. On our return we separated at Mayence, and I travelled alone into Switzerland, but came back to my mother at the end of the year, and received an appointment here in Berlin, but left and was married in 1791. And thus passed away these years, the events of which occurring to yourself you will, in accordance with your kind promise, next describe.

Previous to this time I could not bring myself to tell you why you succeed so admirably in the descriptions you give of mental phenomena. The truth is, you yourself possess one of those beautiful feminine natures which are but rarely found. Unless the soul be richly endowed with perceptive power, firmness, and sentiment, and be at the same time delicately and sensitively formed, we cannot perceive those low notes which might have called forth harmonizing vibrations within us;—but with a nature thus constituted we can recognise and distinguish in others, as well as in our-

selves, intonations of sound the most gentle and almost imperceptible. This capacity constitutes the chief excellence in a character endowed with the highest qualities; it is a gift of nature, but may be developed by early cultivation, by the practice of self-discipline, by avoiding everything ignoble, and by the cultivation of pure morality and a simple heart-felt piety. These mental qualities have rendered you more reflective, and have turned your attention to spiritual conditions, and with these tendencies there is associated a talent for description, language and composition. It is thus I explain a fact so clearly displayed in every part of your autobiography, and in all your letters.

TEGEL, 14th.

I have been here alone for some days, for this stormy weather induced me to leave my family behind in the city. There is truly nothing but storm and rain, yet I am quite well and happy, and shall be still more so when my wife and children join me. Notwithstanding the badness of the weather I took a walk both yesterday and to-day. At the time of sunset, and among woods, we are not so much inconvenienced by stormy weather, for it is generally milder at that hour, and the storm is only heard howling through the tops of the trees. Enough for this day. Farewell.—
With unchangeable constancy and devotion, yours,

H.

LETTER XLIV.

TEGEL, 1st May 1825.

I have received, dear Charlotte, and have perused with great pleasure, your letter posted on the 19th April. I have found in it a repetition of those sentiments which I so highly value; indeed you have in this letter expressed them in language more than usually affectionate. I will answer it word for word.

You are quite right. I was in error when I asserted that it was in the year 1789 we met in Pymont. This occurred a whole year earlier. But about the Easter of that year I certainly arrived for the first time in Göttingen. I was wholly ignorant of the fact that you were in that year already betrothed;—I thought that this had taken place at a much later period. I am not wrong, however, in reference to Campe;—he was indeed at that time teacher (*Hauslehrer*), or, as it was then called, private tutor (*Hofmeister*) to an elder stepbrother of mine, a son of my mother's by her first marriage;—he taught me, however, to read and write, and must have left our house somewhere about the year 1770 or 1771, just about the time of your birth. His books for children might therefore very well have fallen into your hands when you were a child. After he left us, he first became a preacher, but quickly gave up his charge, and joined the Philanthropic Institute of Dessau with Basedow. His journey, however, to Paris, in which I accompanied him, occurred in the year 1789, and therefore later than when you and I first saw each other. From that time I never met him again. A circumstance has occurred this day which has further reminded me of the events of that year. In Jacobi's Correspondence, which has just appeared, there is a letter written by him to La-

vater, to whom he introduced me in 1789;—during the same year I travelled into Switzerland. I experience the greatest pleasure in living over this period of my past existence, and have forgotten but little of even the most trivial circumstances which occurred to me;—but I meditate with far greater pleasure upon the men with whom I then came in contact. During the very year in which you and I met, I had a kind of passion to become acquainted with great men, to know and accurately observe many such characters, and to form in my mind a picture of their habits and peculiarities. By this means I acquired at an early period of life such a knowledge of men as others but seldom attain even at a much later period. Knowledge was to me the chief consideration, and I used it to build up general principles. I classified men, compared them with each other, attentively considered their physiognomies, and in short made them, as far as I could, my peculiar study. Since that time, the information thus acquired has assisted me very much in my intercourse with men. I have learned to estimate every man as he must be appreciated in accordance with his character, and to carry on my projects assisted by those whose characters appeared suitable to my designs; and that discriminating power which as a young man I endeavoured to exercise, has often most visibly assisted me in my more advanced years. I have not for a long time aimed at exercising an influence of this kind over any man. When a man has reached my time of life, he is partly unable to accommodate himself to such differences of character, and to a certain extent he should not desire it: he must preserve his individuality free, walk on with those who harmonize with it, have no other desire than to shape his course in accordance with it, and be content to accompany the rest of mankind with his general good wishes alone.

Are you not also impressed by the quick, the remarkably sudden appearance of spring this year? I think I have

never before witnessed anything like it. An old cherry-tree here, which on the previous day exhibited nothing but naked branches, was within a single night covered with blossoms.

That melancholy feeling attendant upon the revival of nature, which is common to all men who think deeply and observe her operations accurately, is easily comprehended. It does not, to the smallest extent, interfere with our immediate interest in the awakening of nature;—it rather originates from the depth of this very emotion; for every profound sentiment in man becomes naturally of itself of a sad character. Man feels his weakness, and the liability of his nature to change and perishableness; and while in this existence which appears to threaten him only with misfortune and adversity, he perceives himself surrounded by the infinite goodness which nature pours forth at this opening season in order to enrich him with enjoyments of all kinds, he is deeply affected;—and this emotion can only express itself in melancholy joy.

Another and more painful kind of melancholy may arise from this source, in accordance with different mental conditions. There are many who cannot regard the springing forth into renewed existence and activity of so great a variety of living forms, although not of the human kind, without at the same time thinking of their return to their wintry sleep and death, which event will as suddenly happen. That all life is but a progression towards destruction, can nowhere be so clearly seen as in the rolling seasons; and to behold the whole vegetable world starting forth into life with innocent unsuspecting joy, as if it did not once anticipate its wintry death, contains something as deeply affecting as the life of a child who as yet has not dreamt of danger. Farewell.—Unchangeably, with the most sincere and continuous affection, yours,
H.

LETTER XLV.

TEGEL, 15th May 1825.

Much as I love nature, willingly as I loiter with her, I have not been often abroad since my arrival in this place. I am accustomed to walk from six to eight in the evening when no visitors arrive, and this in such cold and rainy weather frequently happens. I prefer the evening to the morning hour on account of the sunset, which I am not easily induced to neglect witnessing daily. It has always appeared to me more beautiful than sunrise, although this may depend upon our being more tranquil and more easily impressed by nature in the evening, when the occupations of the day have been completed.

I am occupied all day in my study, which on the south and south-western side looks directly upon the garden and the tall trees. I regard this constant intercourse with my independent thoughts and with subjects of my own choice, as forming my true life. My ideas, and that which has nourished them, whether in books or in meditations and experiences, occupy me almost entirely and exclusively; and I can truly assert that, if not wholly, yet to a great extent, I have to thank them for that cheerfulness and happiness which I enjoy. My external circumstances merely furnish me with the means of quietly enjoying this spiritual life: I set no particular value on anything else in them. Although I did not enjoy this external leisure during the many years I was employed in business, yet I did not the less feel that I derived my equanimity—my constant tranquillity (out of which springs naturally benevolence towards men in all our relations with them) from this life in ideas separated from all outward trivialities. For even when the mind is compelled by circumstances to occupy itself with other sub-

jects, yet those ideas remain, like the bed in which a river flows, and share their clear tranquillity with the soul. The truly pious man lives peculiarly in this state; and when he is free from all hypocrisy and self-deception,—when he walks in humility and truth, no addition can be made to the peace which springs from such a source. If we have but once accustomed ourselves to this life in ideas, sorrow and misfortune lose their sting: we may be sad, we may be melancholy, but never impatient or destitute of counsel. Having once formed this habit, I always combine this meditation with my literary occupations; but at every step I endeavour to raise myself to independent ideas; which then connect themselves with all that belongs to the ideal world, as well as with all that is essentially bright, attractive, and enduring in the world of reality. In this elevated region of thought, the ideas which previously appeared but as learned occupations destined only for the few, become again simplified, and blended into union with all that possesses a universal interest for man.

I rejoice to think you will receive this letter on Whitsunday, which is always pleasing to you.—With unchangeable constancy, yours,

H.

LETTER XLVI.

BERLIN, 21st May 1825.

The marriage-festival of the Princess Louisa has compelled me to come each succeeding day into the city; but as I am so attached to the country, I come in late, and return as soon as the object of my visit is accomplished. For this reason I can write but little to you this day. I found your letter of the 15th here, and thank you most sincerely for it. It has pleased me very much to find that I did not err in the expectation that I should hear from you to-day, but it pains me to know that you have been and perhaps are still sorrowful: your candid and immediate avowal of the fact has however gratified me.

The Whitsunday festival is above all others pleasing and elevating to the mind, diverting it from trivial affairs, exciting greater hope, and prompting to the formation of worthy resolutions. The celebration of festivals, whether considered in reference to their origin, or to the events they are intended to commemorate, is calculated to confirm our resolutions to employ ourselves seriously, actively, and worthily. Apart from religious considerations, they are useful to subdivide the year, the monotonous uniformity of which would otherwise necessarily produce a sense of weariness. Life appears longer when it is thus subdivided into smaller portions;—and this is something more than a mere deception of the imagination;—but even if it were really nothing more, it would not be proper to undervalue it. Life would be inconceivably poor without the charm which fancy bestows upon it; and although it may be true that it often brings vain fears and idle hopes, yet it far more frequently happens that its illusions wear a pleasing and flattering form, rather than one which is calculated to in-

spire fear. This, however, depends to a great extent upon ourselves and upon our mental dispositions, which, although it is not in our power entirely to change, we yet may influence by a variety of means; for there exists in every sensitive mind a leading sentiment, upon which all other emotions are more or less dependent: if this be of a gay and cheerful nature, it will communicate a like tone to the whole soul; but if dull care and a feeling of hope deferred are blended with it, then all will be sad and sorrowful.

* * * * * *

Your question,—how far we can devote ourselves to a beloved object, and yet remain acceptable to God?—is of very great moral importance. You have yourself very correctly determined the limits within which this may occur, but I think you have omitted some considerations which bear upon the subject. First, I take it for granted that nothing can be displeasing to God which is in accordance with a pure and exalted moral perception. This is certainly your opinion also. In these things God has also this moral perception, and especially that moral feeling which, making still finer distinctions, may reject even that which the perception does not wholly disapprove. But if we go further, and believe that there may be unpermitted things against which morality nevertheless enters no special protest,—this would appear to me to be either an exaggerated statement, or a want of sensitiveness in the moral perceptions. I maintain, that whatever is not disapproved by a pure moral sense cannot be displeasing to God. Man can pronounce only a human judgment. Besides, I cannot think we need entertain any fear of placing a created being upon an equality with God in our love. God wishes to be loved by us, by the love which we bear towards his creatures. An “idolatrous love” is rather a mere expression than a sentence embodying a distinct idea, for no reasonable person can in any way compare a weak perishable man with the Most High: such a comparison could only result from

unregulated passion; and we shall certainly find that such a love is never so pure and free from stain, even towards the object of its idolatry, as to enable it to stand blameless before the tribunal of a free, enlarged moral sense. Thus everything comes back to the same point.

You must perfectly understand me, dear Charlotte:—When I speak of a moral sense, I always mean one which is thoroughly purified by being conjoined with a true and sincere piety: mere morality, apart from religion, may easily wander from the true path. Neither do I mean a moral sense which is uncertain and indistinct: it must be based upon knowledge and clear insight, and it should never be allowed to go beyond these, except to such an extent as may enable us to discriminate with more delicacy and certainty,—just as the deep-felt music of a song adds something to the mere literal sense of the words. An inclination, the gratification of which is permitted by such a moral sense, needs not anxiously to require that limits be assigned to it: whatever point it may attain, it will always remain a pure, a pious desire, which can never confound the Creator with the created, and will never be tempted away from the former.

It is undoubtedly true that God can remove the object of our affections at any time; but if our love be such as I have described, the event, though it may cast us into profound grief, will not deprive us of our consistency and firmness, for a religious moral sense could never have approved of the affection, had it not been of such a nature as would prompt us in such a case to surrender ourselves with humility to the dispensations of Providence. All the rest appears to me easily to explain itself.

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It is delightful above all things to meditate upon the past, and to look back upon the events of former years. Whatever in that past has once influenced our minds,—

whatever has once been conceived and experienced, has determined the present state of our reflective and perceptive faculties, and the tendency of our desires.

* * * * *

The fixed undeviating connexion which exists in man between each and every one of his mental states, is one of the most wonderful and incomprehensible facts in his nature. It is impossible to suppose that thoughts and emotions can lie as it were locked up in the soul or heart: they must be so connected with each other, that when one presents itself in a certain way to the mind, others shall immediately follow, like the vibrations of the string of a musical instrument. Hence it must in this way result, that at every period of our life our whole previous existence stands always in connexion with our present,—and thus whatever is at any moment going on within us is much more closely related to the past than we are generally accustomed to imagine.

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We can never entertain a single purpose originating in deep feeling, without its being liable to be called enthusiastic and extravagant by men of cold and unexcitable dispositions. The reason is, that it passes completely beyond the round of mere everyday life, and requires that the feelings shall be more than usually excited, without being at the same time diminished in delicacy, before it can be duly appreciated.

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LETTER XLVII.

TEGEL, 6th June 1825.

I should have written to you, dear Charlotte, the day before yesterday, but I preferred waiting the arrival of your letter, thinking that you would like a speedy answer; and since I have become acquainted with its contents, my previous determination has gratified me very much; for I have no doubt but that what I shall say will impart greater clearness to your thoughts, and wherever this reigns, tranquillity exists, or at least it gradually develops itself.

Yesterday I received your letter, and I thank you most sincerely for every mark of love and confidence it contains, —all of which I recognise and appreciate as they deserve. You may rest assured that I am far from making the slightest complaint against you, even in the most secret recesses of my heart, and that to the greatest possible extent I see into your nature, and feel most thankfully the rare, delicate, sincere, and firm attachment you entertain for me. You may also perceive from my letters how I enter into all your thoughts, how I solve your difficulties, and with how much pleasure I reply to all your questions; and although this is not done from a mere desire to display my thankfulness, but is prompted by a sincere attachment towards you, and an unaffected interest in your welfare, it may nevertheless be accepted by you as an additional proof of my gratitude. I have not, nor can I ever forget, that throughout a long life you have retained your early sentiments towards me; and as little can I forget that in confidence you have disclosed to me the rich treasures of your highly gifted mind;—and this, as I have frequently before remarked, is a rare treasure for a man to enjoy.

I am very sorry to find you, dear Charlotte, always complaining of despondency and of deep melancholy. This state of mind I cannot approve:—you must contend earnestly against it. I ascribe this mental condition to a too close application to your employment during the winter months, although in part it is certainly dependent upon constitutional causes. It must not be forgotten that we require to be trained to continued exertion,—indeed I may say we must be born to it, before we can hope to practise it with impunity. This was far from being your case, for you always enjoyed unlimited leisure, until circumstances, at an age when the vigour of early life had fled, determined your present position. Although I highly esteem both your perseverance and determination, yet it grieves me deeply that it should be so, and that it was not possible to obtain a recompense for your losses, and thus to effect a complete change in your position.

If you correctly understand my letters, it is impossible that they should add to your mental distress. You must see in every line of them that I am filled with deep sympathy and affectionate regard for you—that I would not wish you to be at all otherwise than you are, and that it would afford me sincere pleasure to know that you were cheerful and happy—that I would immediately remove every circumstance disagreeable to you, and would joyfully promote your happiness as far as my years and my nature will permit. Ever remain assured of the truth of these assertions. You will constantly find me the same, and indeed it were greatly to be lamented if you were to make yourself unhappy without cause, or to entertain cares which were utterly devoid of foundation. It appears to me that our relative position is as definite as it can possibly be. You know your own sentiments; and as to mine, I have preserved from youth unto advanced life the memory of our meeting, and the interest which, fleeting as it was, it produced. I have rejoiced in the opportunity since afforded

me of giving utterance to this sympathy; it still exists in me active and sincere, and, as you know, I derive most unquestionable gratification from the communication of your thoughts and sentiments. This calm and delightful intercourse, which is so well adapted both to my years and my wishes, we may uninterruptedly carry on as long as our pilgrimage in life shall continue; for on my part there is nothing that can interfere with it, and I know of no circumstance on yours which should interrupt it. If this be satisfactory to you—and I am fully persuaded that it is so—then is our intercourse as pure as it is possible to imagine. Do not suppose for a single moment that you are the only gainer by our correspondence: I have often told you that your letters, the unaffected assurances of your attachment, and the narrative of your life, have given and continue to give me the greatest delight. Whenever I have thought that you could render me any particular gratification, I have, as you have seen, freely and unreservedly mentioned it; and if you could not grant my desire, I have withdrawn my request, entertaining no other feeling than simply that two persons could not think exactly alike, and most assuredly without a single emotion of anger or complaint—without, as I can with truth assert, a single feeling which could in any way have proved disagreeable to you. Such a difference of opinion, dear Charlotte, must not grieve you either. There are already so many things which are calculated to sadden the happiest life, that we must not intentionally add to their number. Certainly a tendency to melancholy is not a voluntary condition; but we have it in our power to struggle against it. This indeed requires self-command;—and thus I come back to my position, that all men stand in need of this power.

Now I think, dear Charlotte, that I have spoken so openly upon this subject, that to you at least there can be nothing obscure or mysterious about me. I must now correct a part of your letter in which you show that you

have completely misunderstood me. You say that I am sufficient to myself—that I require nothing more to render me happy. This is certainly correct; and however rigorously I may search my own heart, I cannot find anything blameable in this condition: it is rather the fruit of a long life devoted to the realization of this end. I live in sentiment, meditations, and ideas: these are the means by which I elevate myself above all foreign assistance; and as my thoughts are directed towards imperishable things, they will not permit me to despond when my expectations fail, as I have often experienced when misfortunes befel me. It is only when in this sense a man wants nothing, that he can be considered free from egotism; for when we require nothing for ourselves, we can be far more useful to others. We then enjoy every pleasure to a much greater extent, because it is no longer a necessity, but a pure addition to the happiness of our existence. All that has the character of a necessity has this peculiarity: its presence affords us a less amount of pleasure than its absence does of pain. On this account I feel the loss of a beloved friend more deeply than other men do, although I may endure it with more calmness and resolution;—and I have experienced this more than once. But I do not contrast sorrow with happiness: I subdivide sensations of happiness into sorrowful and cheerful, and do not consider the one as less essential than the other. This is the sense in which I intended those remarks to be taken which you have misunderstood. If you look through all my past letters, you will find the same sentiments constantly repeated. That solitary passages may not appear otherwise I will not assert, for it is not possible always to define everything distinctly.

When you assert that the word “inconsistent” is not very pleasing to you, you certainly mean the perverted use of the word;—real consistency you surely approve and value as highly as I do,—it means only the steady observance of admitted principles.—Farewell. Depend with cer-

tainty upon the unchangeableness of my sentiments; above all, avoid indulging in useless cares, make yourself cheerful, and remember that by so doing you will give me pleasure, and this you always do willingly.—Sincerely yours,

H.

LETTER XLVIII.

BURGÜRNER, Aug. 18, 1825.

I have been here some days, and have already enjoyed the feeling which accompanies a residence in a province or district far removed from the precincts of any great city. In such a position I always find myself particularly happy; I experience a most peculiar pleasure; I am entirely free from the anxieties of life, and can even very well dispense with public news. Under these circumstances I am accustomed to follow out my occupations in accordance with a uniform plan, and I endeavour as far as possible to adhere to one train of thought. I have always felt a great desire to penetrate profoundly into a subject; and I have frequently had opportunities of experiencing in myself both the advantages and disadvantages of such a plan;—for it cannot be denied that this partiality towards the same oft-repeated employment, this poring over one and the same idea, exercises a limiting, contracting, and therefore hurtful influence upon our minds;—indeed, deep reflection produces the same result as dissipation of thought—that is to say, that in both many things are passed over unnoticed, and many are unskilfully handled,—the only difference being, that a man in the latter state fritters away his mind in nothings, and neither finds nor possesses anything to which he can attach himself; whilst, on the other hand, the profound thinker always has some one thing, which compensates him for the neglect of all others. Most prejudicial do I find this disposition (*viz.* to give myself up to one subject) when in the open air, which then for the most part consists of an abstract thought. My love for nature is unbounded,—and the enjoyment which I derive from the

contemplation of even an unvaried country, to say nothing of that which one of greater beauty confers upon me, exceeds perhaps all others; but the impression which nature makes upon my mind always connects itself with the train of thought with which I may be occupied;—it becomes transformed into a general sentiment, whilst on the other hand a great many individual features escape my attention. I could never have been a naturalist; and certainly I have permitted many objects, both in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, to pass by unnoticed; yet I could not divest myself of this meditative tendency, and was not only unable to exchange it for a habit of an opposite character, but I could not readily bring myself to adopt that middle course between the two extremes which we are accustomed to regard, and justly so, as the best we can pursue. We learn, however, to understand more thoroughly those subjects to which we attach ourselves exclusively and with stability of purpose; the longer we contemplate them, the more inexhaustible do they appear. Indeed we cannot assert that the things of this world ever fully disclose to us all that is contained within them. One person recognises features which another fails to observe; and it would appear as if human perception itself, when sharpened by a due amount of thought, first brings to light its own object. For this reason, to those who possess a meditative tendency the simplest matter often proves sufficient to occupy their attention for a long time, and in a way by no means fruitless or unprofitable. In particular, I have always observed that this constant meditation, when applied to outward objects, and not to mere thoughts, discovers what in them has been the work of time: we recognise traces of the past within the present, and indeed we frequently gain faint glimpses of that future towards which it tends. A charm of the highest description always lies in such results as these; for whatever is calculated to throw light upon the course the stream of Time may take, proves to us a source of unspeak-

able delight. And this is perfectly natural;—for we are but the creatures of time; our fate rests upon it as on the surface of an ever-agitated sea, on which we never know whether we can safely trust the present, and whether a deceitful future is not awaiting us. This deep insight into the subject contemplated is but the least of the advantages for which we are indebted to the habit of meditation; for you might very justly reply that there are but few subjects which deserve such profound investigation. But the gain which accrues to the soul from this concentration of its powers upon a fixed point—from this contentedness with a few subjects upon which it may isolate itself,—is the most important. There arises necessarily from this source a greater spiritual earnestness, a more lofty enthusiasm, a love with which we embrace that with which we feel ourselves to be, as it were, alone in the world; and this becomes in its turn a means by which the character is influenced,—or rather, since here no external influence comes into play, and this habit proceeds from the mind itself, the character develops itself thereby, and unfolds within itself a higher dignity and a more expressive beauty. For there are ideas which have grown up with us, which accompany us as friends, guides, and consolers, from which we can never be separated; and these ideas, which thus cling to our nature, are always the most peculiar; they are often quite incomprehensible to others, or are understood by them only after many years;—and this does not depend upon the fact that they are either too lofty or too obscure, as is generally supposed, but simply upon the impossibility of viewing them apart from the individual with whom they are indissolubly connected.

In reference to ideas of this kind, I could never relinquish the most trifling of them without a complete change in my former convictions. Nothing could compensate me for such a loss, and any sacrifice we might be called upon to make for the sake of deep, long-existing convictions,

must in truth be but small in comparison with the loss of the idea itself. The firmness which is thus manifested is not intellectual egotism ; it does not even arise solely from the understanding. For although it has its origin in the understanding, in the same way as our convictions of those objects with which this firmness is associated, yet in the mind which is accustomed to devote itself wholly and in a manner exclusively to one idea and the object connected with it, there is combined with this firmness,—warmth, sentiment, and a peculiar love. In virtue of this tone of mind the whole life is rendered more spiritual ; and when it has become inherent in us, it maintains, as I have experienced at different periods of my life, the same spirituality even amid great outward changes. It renders whoever possesses it independent of all external influences. Especially is the necessity of associating ourselves with outward objects thereby diminished, for the love awakened by a purely spiritual idea already supplies its place. Where, however, something external coöperates with the idea, the effect is doubly strong and enduring. The ideas which thus accompany us throughout life are also naturally those which best prepare us to bear its loss ; for as life derives its chief value from them, and they are united with the profoundest energies of our souls, I cannot conceive why, being that which most peculiarly belongs to us, they should not accompany us into another state of existence. It is indeed to be hoped, and with faith to be expected, that they will attend upon the soul, brighter, clearer, and in new and more manifold applications.

It has afforded me the greatest happiness to find it expressed in your letter, and to perceive in its general tone, that you are again cheerful and contented,—that you have once more acknowledged that it is my desire to make you so. Most assuredly I entertained no other than these kindly sentiments towards you, when our correspondence commenced a few years ago. I believe my sentiments have

remained constantly the same, and you may depend upon them still further with perfect confidence. The principles according to which I regulate my conduct do not originate in caprice, and as little are they founded upon selfish desires. It has also given me much pleasure to find, as was formerly the case, this full and perfect confidence conjoined in you with affectionate interest and devoted regard. Continue, dearest Charlotte, to hold these sentiments inviolate, and nothing can ever happen to disturb our intercourse.

You are quite right in disliking consistency when it is mere obstinate caprice which assumes that noble name: such consistency is nothing but reprehensible hypocrisy. But we must not regard everything as caprice the foundation of which we do not clearly perceive, or which rests upon a foundation which we have not capacity to comprehend: this would be falling into an opposite extreme. Still less should we give the name of consistency to that quality of the mind which leads one obstinately to maintain an opinion he no longer regards as true: this would be nothing but a mere love of wrangling, or the weakness which would render us unwilling to confess before others that we have been in error. Whenever we discover that such is the case, we ought to feel no difficulty in avowing the fact to others. I do not value that state of mind which would induce us to wrap ourselves up in our principles, opinions, and sentiments, and to regard them as true, simply because we have long considered them in this light. I would much rather apply new tests to them, and if even the very principle to which I was most attached were suddenly to appear to me in a new light, I should not conceal it for a single moment. I would then not only abandon my former opinion, but I would unhesitatingly avow that I had abandoned it. It is however precisely when we are thus disposed, that we are less likely to coincide in the opinions of others, for we are then ourselves inclined to meditation, and the principles and opinions which we entertain are based upon these medi-

tations, and are such as we do not readily exchange for others, however open we may hold ourselves to the results of new investigations.

You say that during the past week you have been engaged in serious self-examination, and that you have narrowly scrutinized the recesses of your heart;—you must therefore have experienced how beneficial this is. I always return from such examinations (which I regard as our best and noblest employment) with a cheerfulness not easily to be disturbed. By self-examination we discover either that our state of mind is one which it is desirable to retain, and that nothing more is necessary, in order to enjoy greater light and distinctness of thought, than that we analyze and clear it from complications,—and this is certainly your case; or, we are compelled to blame and feel dissatisfied with ourselves,—the result of which is, that we change our sentiments and force ourselves to adopt that course which either through error, weakness, or some other perversity, we had previously rejected, and in the consciousness of having returned to the right path, we enjoy a new and now securely established happiness.—Farewell. Remain cheerful and calm, and depend upon the constancy and unchangeableness of my sentiments. H.

LETTER XLIX.

BURGÖRNER, Sept. 6, 1825.

It is near midnight when I begin this letter to you, although this is but Tuesday, and it cannot leave before Friday. In correspondence, I have a habit (not altogether commendable) of following my own inclinations as to the time at which I should write, rather than attending to the post-days. In a confidential correspondence like ours, this is not well. It is natural to wish that such letters should reach the hands of those for whom they are intended as quickly as possible. But other letters, such as refer to things with which the soul has little or no concern, may, not improperly, lie by a few days. We may perhaps have occasion to alter them.

Your remarks in reference to the influence which a quicker or slower rate of the circulation of the blood exerts upon the mind, are perfectly true; and in judging of others, we ought not to lose sight of this fact. At the same time it is a beautiful attribute of our nature, a privilege granted by the Creator to man exclusively, and before all the other creatures of this world, that he feels that by thought and resolution he can control and govern every physical influence, however powerful it may be. An inward voice proclaims to us that we are free and independent: it imputes to us good and evil, and in the judgments which we pass on ourselves, which must be always more rigid and severe than those of others, we must entirely throw out of sight all such physical influences. Man is the subject of two distinct jurisdictions, that of dependence and that of freedom, and the mere understanding is not sufficient to settle the strife between them. In the visible world all things seem to be so connected together, that if we were acquainted

with all possible occurrences, even the smallest and most remote, we could show that at every moment of time we were compelled by necessity to act exactly as we did act. And yet we still feel within us the conviction that if we did but will it, we could grasp the revolving wheel, and free ourselves from the chain that binds us to it. In this consciousness of his freedom lies the true dignity of man. This also it is whereby he leaves the world of dependence and enters that of freedom. For in the material, nothing can be free,—in the spiritual, nothing can be held in bondage. The only way in which we can reconcile this opposition, is by supposing that there is a sovereignty of the world of freedom as a whole, over the world of dependence as a whole, which in single events only we are unable to comprehend, but which so conducts the concatenated series of events, throughout the ages, that they must at all times correspond with the determinations of free will.

In whatever light I may view your physical condition, dear Charlotte, it yet seems to me very much to depend upon the state of your mind. Endeavour, therefore, above all things, to render yourself in all respects cheerful and tranquil. It is indeed easier to say this than to do it, but yet much may be accomplished if we will but set before us clearly and distinctly, all that is productive of anxiety, and recal to mind all with which we can feel content, or which may afford cause for thankfulness. If the mind succeeds in banishing the diseased or morbid condition entirely from itself, and in confining it to the body alone, an infinite amount of good is realized. After this we may endure physical suffering with determination, and not merely with apparent but real tranquillity; indeed we may not merely endure it, but it may be made to exert a purifying and softening influence on the soul. I have myself been frequently unwell, and twice dangerously so, but I have never suffered from continuous ill health, or from what may be termed a weak constitution. I have, however, had fre-

quent intercourse with both men and women whose daily condition was of this nature, and who had no hope of release except by death. Schiller especially belonged to this class;—he suffered constantly and severely, and knew well, as ultimately proved to be the case, that these continual sufferings would gradually lead him to the tomb. Yet of him it might be truly said that he held his sufferings confined to the body. For at whatever time you might visit him—under whatever circumstances you might find him, he was always tranquil and cheerful, inclined to friendly intercourse, and to interesting and even profound conversation. He was even accustomed to say that a man worked the better when suffering under a certain degree of illness, provided only it were not too severe; and I have often found him under circumstances of the most uncheering nature, composing poems and essays, in which it would have been impossible to discover a trace of the influences under which they were written.

When debility is associated with an excited state of the circulation, with disquiet or with much anxiety, and this state continues for many years, I can comprehend that it is particularly adapted to induce weariness of life; but against this state we should contend with all our energies. I will not at once fall back upon the position that this is an express religious duty: but life, even when extended to its utmost limit, is so short when compared with eternity, of the nature of our existence in which we are unable, at least beforehand, to form any conception, that we should not desire to limit it still more by our wishes, but rather conduct ourselves in it as well as we are able; and certainly it is far more important how we accept our fortune, than what that fortune really may be. It is a proverbial expression that every man creates his own lot. We are accustomed to regard this as implying that every man, by the folly or wisdom of his actions, prepares good or evil for himself. But we may view it in another light,—namely,

that we may so accommodate ourselves to the dispensations of Providence, as to be happy in our lot, whatever may be its privations.

Bestow upon me your affectionate remembrances, and be assured of mine. My thoughts dwell oftener upon you than you imagine.—Yours, H.

If you write to me by the 20th, your letter will still find me here in Burgörner;—if later, in Berlin.

LETTER L.

BURGÖRNER, Sept. 26, 1825.

I have received, dear Charlotte, your letter commenced on the 4th, and concluded on the 6th of this month, and I return you my warmest thanks for the kind and affectionate expressions towards me which it contains. But I have remarked with sorrow that you again complain of the despondent state of your mind, of a feeling of desolation and of joylessness; and that you beseech me to bear with you—to regard you as a patient, and treat you with indulgence. Upon this subject, dear Charlotte, you need entertain no anxiety, for you by no means stand in need of my forbearance; there is nothing displeasing to me in this strain—it only pains me to know that you should suffer from such a state of mind; and therefore do not attempt to excuse yourself. I could wish that you were cheerful, and in a more comfortable frame of mind, that you were content both with your position and your occupations, that you could pass the remaining portion of your life happily. But I can well imagine how a series of adverse circumstances should intimidate and depress the mind; and that feeling of confidence which leads you to tell me whenever this state of depression supervenes, is very dear to me. I believe of course that we can do much to avert such a state, or, if it has established itself, to change it into one of a happier nature. But at the same time I am quite willing to grant, that what one person, under certain circumstances, may find possible and even not very difficult to accomplish, may to another, and under different circumstances, prove almost impracticable. In reference, therefore, to such a despondent state, not a word is to be said of “displeasure,” and

and nothing expressed but sincere sympathy. Meanwhile I am convinced that it will not long continue, but will soon pass away. If you will permit me to advise you, I would say, Take care at such a time, turn your thoughts as little as possible upon yourself, seek rather to employ yourself about outward matters,—by which I do not so much mean your usual occupations, as some other self-chosen employment, and also reading or writing,—and leave the rest to time. You yourself very justly remark that this is the best and most effectual remedy for such a condition. I understand perfectly well that state of mind which you particularly mention. You designate it, most correctly, with your usual clearness and felicity of expression, as a barren, desolate frame of mind. This state is entirely distinct from that which is produced by a single sorrow, or even from the pain which results from a position of general unhappiness. These latter certainly take more violent hold of the mind and disturb its tranquillity to a greater extent, but they call into activity a great and opposing power: the contest elevates whilst it troubles the soul, and it is quickly and efficiently decided. On the other hand, the passive, desolate state of mind must find something whereby it may be elevated and excited to activity from without; and this is the more difficult, for this very condition prevents its entry into the mind. But in the meantime there are two things which even under such circumstances always find a welcome reception in the soul,—*i. e.* the pleasure we derive from nature, and thought actively employed upon ideas. You will here ask me what I mean by ideas, for in your letter you have already said that I have left you in uncertainty upon this point. I do not refer to isolated, specific ideas, but to a state in which we are actively employed with deep and profound meditation itself. This meditative state may set out from, and attach itself to, all things;—but its aim, the end at which it always arrives, is ever one and the same,—namely, the destiny of mankind as a whole,

and its solution at the moment when all earthly things fall away and lose their value, and only the purely spiritual remains—that which we can only still regard as human in so far as we ourselves are also destined for the highest purposes. In the private affairs of life, in such worldly events as pass before our eyes, and in the memories of both derived from bygone times, the mind willingly searches out the often complicated causes, examines such consequences as are already visible, or which are to be expected; and lastly, dwells upon the thought how much after all will be found to possess true value when weighed in the balance, and what portion this will be. When, therefore, I speak of occupying ourselves with ideas—of being immersed in their contemplation—of being directed towards one point,—I do not mean a state in which we are employed with single subjects, but with meditation itself—one in which we seek to divest things of their appearance,—in which we are employed in the examination of ourselves and others in bringing all our thoughts to bear upon that which alone carries within itself its own excellence, and which even in frail man cannot perish because it does not originate within him, and which, measured by a true standard, is alone worthy of a free and unconditional surrender of ourselves to it. I do not include learned or merely scientific inquiries amongst the subjects of such meditation. These may be the means of collecting and preparing materials for such meditation; they may guide, rectify, and purify it, but its ultimate purpose cannot be contained in them. Truly salutary meditation requires nothing but concentration of the powers of the mind, and every one can attain it, since the terminal threads of human destiny, with which all things are connected, must be laid hold of by every man; and the ideas which are thus called into activity exist in all—in the learned as well as in the unlearned, differing only in degrees of precision and lucidity. Profound mental powers are not so much required to enable us to devote ourselves

to those meditations, as a mind strengthened and enlightened by the expulsion of vanity and of all improper desires, by indifference to pleasure and external prosperity, and by the habit of self-command. The employment of our intellectual faculties upon our internal condition exerts a beneficial influence upon us, analogous to that which the sun produces in nature; it disperses the mists of the mind, it enlightens and invigorates the soul, and thus elevates it to a state of higher tranquillity. Whenever I am put out of humour by any circumstance, which certainly does not happen thrice in the year, or when I am unwell, nothing recovers me with such certainty from both these conditions as an occupation which exercises my mind closely and in one direction.

You mean, I believe, by what you call your joyless state, not a position in which there is no joy in life, but a state in which the soul has lost, to a greater or less extent, its capacity for it. You ask me whether I have ever experienced this condition. Throughout the whole course of my life it has always been unknown to me. Men who live in a certain easy gratification of every desire—and this has generally been my lot—are accustomed readily to lose their sense of enjoyment, and a feeling of indifference is apt to spring up in its place; but this has never been the case with me. I can much rather with truth and thankfulness assert, that I daily strengthen my experience that, for those who know how to gather it, a source of pleasure lies in every natural object. My sensitiveness is by no means injured by successive forms of this enjoyment; on the contrary, it rather appears to me as if my mind recognised them more actively and with a juster appreciation.

I hope to receive a letter from you in a day or two, and therefore I will not yet close mine, for I expect and trust that you will write to me confidentially and openly upon the subject of your deep mental despondency and upon its cause, which I desire to see finally removed. It has already continued too long.

I will not act in accordance with my first intention to wait the arrival of your letter. I will rather dispatch this, for I know you to be in a state of mind in which my remarks may prove beneficial ; they will certainly express the deep sympathy with which I remain unchangeably yours,

H.

LETTER LI.

I have received your letter of the 20th, dear Charlotte, before mine can have reached you. I write to you, however, immediately, although I cannot say much to-day. I thank you with my whole heart for having informed me of your present condition with all the openness and sincerity I expected of you. Yes, dear Charlotte, I have known for many weeks all that has been passing in your mind; and it was an erroneous judgment on my part when I conceived that in a soul so deep as yours such emotions would of themselves pass away. You have placed clearly and distinctly before me all that has made you so despondent of late. You found it impossible to overcome the painful feeling arising from the thought that you could not grant me "the little pleasure which I requested in return" for the thousand joys which, as you affectionately express yourself, you receive. You lament at the same time, "that you robbed yourself of that higher culture in which you would have participated, had you but unconditionally surrendered yourself to my guidance." You allege as a melancholy impediment, but without wishing in the least to justify yourself, the painful irritability of a nervous system destroyed by great and long-continued suffering; and lastly, you wisely and amiably permit yourself continually to hope that in time you will gain more strength, as I have always anticipated, and that you have not given up the possibility of returning at a later period to my views and of consenting to my wishes, although you have not been able to promise this. All this has given birth to that deep melancholy which has wholly mastered you. Dear, good Charlotte, I have recognised all these feelings within you for these many

weeks past ; and I may say I have fully appreciated them ; they have increased my sincere and heartfelt esteem. They are the natural emotions of an elevated feminine mind ; they are worthy of you, and I thank you with the greatest sincerity for having esteemed me worthy of so unreserved a disclosure of your mental condition. Do but attend to my request. I repeat what I have often said, that none of my sentiments towards you are altered, but that they are all directed towards you with affectionate interest, in word and deed such as you would desire. It would indeed be truly lamentable were you not once again to receive this assertion with a trustful heart. Your earlier, beautiful, cheerful contentedness must at last return. I will most willingly, as hitherto, give you my assistance ; but you must likewise fulfil your part, and above all you must not torment yourself any longer with those delusive imaginations with which you have filled a heart once so faithful and so pious, and which is accustomed to submit not only its actions but its thoughts to the approval of a high and invisible Judge. Listen to me, think over, and follow my entreaties and my advice ;—you will thereby give me great delight. Farewell. Pardon the brevity of this letter,—but I am about to leave this place. Direct your next to Berlin.—Yours, with unchangeable affection, H.

P.S.—You mention in your last letter an idea, which you say is very interesting. You call it an hypothesis upon which you often dwell with much pleasure. You know how much I occupy myself with ideas, and how yours interest me. I entreat you to place your thoughts distinctly before me upon a separate sheet of paper,—and do this very soon :—it will give me the greatest pleasure, for, as I have often told you, I desire to know accurately all that arises within and excites your mind, and you esteem me worthy of this confidence, which I regard with the greatest thankfulness, and value as a high gift.

LETTER LII.

TEGEL, 17th October 1825.

I have been here since the beginning of October, and shortly after my arrival I received your letter of the 4th. I thank you, dear Charlotte, most particularly and most sincerely, for every passage which it contains. It has fully answered my expectations. Yes, I knew, and had perfect confidence that you would do me the pleasure of acceding to my entreaties and representations. And now I think it better not to dwell any longer upon this subject, but to pass on to other matters. One remark, however, I must make,—*i. e.* that I see with gladness and deep interest that you are in better health, and that you have made some alterations in your regimen. It also delights me much to know that you have at last consulted a physician. Attend to his advice when it is not too disagreeable to you. A disease of the mind, which, however, I do not ascribe to you, soon disappears of itself: a mind healthy and pure like yours will easily heal fancied evils by earnest and sustained treatment of itself; for God has given us free will for this purpose, that we may either receive or reject whatever deliberate reason may think fit.

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You have certainly remarked, as well as myself, the beauty of the stars in the eastern heavens during the latter part of September and the beginning of October. Three planets and a star of the first magnitude were situated near to each other,—Mars and Jupiter in the constellation Leo, and Venus later, as the morning-star, near Sirius. I merely mention this in order that you may have an opportunity of retrieving your loss, should you have neglected to observe them. Their appearance was most beautiful between three

and four in the morning. I and my wife have risen almost every morning, and have remained a long time by the window; and each time it was with difficulty that we could turn away from the beautiful sight. From my youth I have taken great delight in the stars and in the contemplation of the starry heavens. My wife sympathises in this as in almost every other of my inclinations; and during the whole course of my life, on clear starry nights, I have spent sometimes a greater, sometimes a lesser time in their contemplation; but seldom has the year and season been so favourable for this purpose as this remarkably beautiful and clear autumn has proved. I cannot say that, when regarding the stars, it is so much the contemplation of their infinitude and the immensity of the space which they occupy that fills me with delight: such thoughts tend rather to confuse the intellect; and moreover, in our opinions respecting their countless numbers and the vastness of space, there is contained much which rests upon views which are but human, and not destined to endure for ever. Still less do I contemplate them in reference to another life; but the mere thought that they are so far removed, so far above all earthly things—the feeling that all earthly things vanish before them—that the individual man, when compared with these worlds scattered throughout space, sinks into insignificance—that his destiny, his enjoyments, his privations, to which he attaches so much importance, disappear as nothing before their greatness!—and then again, the thought that the stars unite all men and all ages,—that they have witnessed all things from the very beginning, and will behold all that futurity contains! In these reflections I lose myself in silent delight whenever I contemplate the stars of heaven. Indeed it is a truly sublime spectacle, when in the stillness of night, and in a perfectly cloudless sky, they arise and set in choral harmony. Existence in some measure divides itself into two portions:—the one, belonging to the earthly, is silent in the perfect stillness of night,

whilst the other alone comes forth in sublimity, pomp, and majesty. Viewed in this light, the starry heavens truly exercise a moral influence over us; and who can readily stray into the paths of immorality if he has been accustomed to live in such thoughts and emotions, and frequently to dwell upon them? How are we entranced by the simple splendour of this wonderful drama of nature? I have often thought, dear Charlotte, that a slight study of astronomy would prove particularly pleasing to you. Should you desire it, I will with pleasure give you some instruction, and will name such books as might prove useful.

* * * * *

You ask me whether I have been alone or with my family. We were in Burgörner this summer, with all our children and some relatives; so that although the house is tolerably extensive, there was not a single apartment to spare. My daughter from Silesia, however, came at a later period, and my youngest son left us before her arrival. I have not been constantly in Burgörner. Once I travelled to my daughter's place of residence in order to fetch her, and at another time I spent some days alone upon two estates belonging to my wife. I can with truth assert that I enjoy both solitude and the family circle. I would never wish myself removed from the latter into the former position; but when I am alone, my own resources are sufficient to enable me to fill up my time. Yet no one can live more simply, or be more happy and cheerful in the family circle than I am;—all are content with me, and I am content with all. There is never any dissension, want of harmony, or trouble among us, except such as sickness may produce. Such a life, inasmuch as it by no means abounds in incident, affords but little subject for remark. Thank God, we have continued exempt from illness; and my wife, who at times has much to suffer, but by great strength of mind and serenity of purpose permits but little of it to be seen outwardly—has been for some time much better, both ac-

tually and in her appearance. My eldest daughter and her husband accompanied me here, but my eldest son and his wife have returned to Silesia, where my second daughter will also shortly follow them. These were the outward features of my life, and this is its present state.

It has never been my habit to speak willingly in my letters upon such subjects, and this is why I had forgotten to tell you whether my journey had been made alone or in company. I attach no importance to narrations; events and occurrences are no further interesting to me than for the thoughts and emotions which they serve to call forth. In conversation, I never relate anything where I ought not, and I carry no information into my family concerning either myself or others. Although I do not blame it in others, yet it always appears to me to indicate a certain poverty of ideas, when either in writing or conversing we begin to narrate. I was never of opinion that it was the part of friendship to communicate all that might happen, whether of a joyous or a sorrowful nature. It may indeed be called friendship, and may prove so, but, thank God! there is at all events a friendship of a more exalted character, which is based upon higher and purer principles, and which being occupied with something nobler, does not concern itself with such narrations.

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You will shortly receive, dear Charlotte, that which I have long promised you,—namely, a roll of engravings illustrative of this house, together with a ground-plan and description, so that by their help you may acquire a clear idea of my existence here, where I chiefly reside. The engravings belong to a general work on architecture, and until now I could not obtain single plates; but I have found a way of procuring them; and therefore remember, when you receive a roll of engravings, that it comes from me.

I have again perused your letter. There is one passage upon which I often dwell: it has afforded me much plea-

sure, and I have read it frequently. There are so many beautiful, and even elevated and ennobling ideas associated with this delightful relationship,—this lasting friendship! First, I dwell upon the thought that you have dedicated to me those feelings even from early youth, and have tenderly preserved them in more advanced age, unconnected with one extraneous desire or wish. We have here, then, even amid earthly vicissitude, a proof of duration, of imperishability, and we may even say of eternity, and on the other hand, of a firm reliance on the unchangeable, and of an appreciation of what alone possesses true value for man—in the worthy enjoyment of a higher happiness, and the rejection of all petty and narrow-hearted restrictions. For such restrictions, which we so frequently encounter, and in which those who cherish them find their greatest delight, only prove the sensual impurity of the feelings which need such barriers behind which to conceal themselves. True love, which remains faithful to its high origin, warms, like the sun, as far as its beams extend, and transfigures and illumines all things in its purifying splendour. Finally, such a conviction impressed upon the soul elevates it in faith and hope. If unwavering fidelity and love are our companions here in finiteness and imperfection—if here we already possess imperishable blessings, which shall accompany us beyond this life, and which we cannot leave behind, how much ought we to be enlivened and delighted by the hope of once more recognising in the higher radiance of the eternal world, that which has already blessed us here, as the free gift of heaven.

Depend, dear Charlotte, with equal firmness, upon the constant and uniform affection with which I am yours,

H.

LETTER LIII.

BERLIN, October 30, 1825.

I write you only a few lines to-day,—merely that the engravings of Tegel may not go altogether unaccompanied. The purposes to which particular rooms are applied are in part indicated on the plan. I occupy that which is marked the Library, together with the cabinet next to it, looking towards the garden. Besides this, there are on the ground-floor no other rooms but those for the domestics;—the dining-room is on the first story, above the kitchen, as is seen also in the plan. We sleep on the opposite side of the house, in the circular projection looking towards the court. My wife and unmarried daughter occupy the remainder of this story, which also contains the drawing-room. The second story is reserved for my children; and as there are more here than it will contain, we find places for them on the first floor also. Farewell.—Ever yours,

H.

LETTER LIV.

BERLIN, Nov. 8, 1825.

By this time you will have received the engravings, which I know beforehand will afford you much pleasure. They are so correct, that when carefully examined, they must convey a very accurate idea of the house. I like the place very much, although in truth I am not much there. This year I have passed scarcely four months within it. In winter I have many reasons for being in the city, although even at that season of the year a residence in the country would prove more pleasing both to my wife and myself. In summer business connected with my other estates compels me, or at least affords me an opportunity of visiting this also. Thus, with all apparent freedom, we are yet not always able to do that which would be the most agreeable to us.

I am attached to Tegel for many reasons, but principally on account of the statues which it contains: these are partly marble antiques, and partly casts from the antique. They stand in the different apartments, and I am continually surrounded by them. A taste for sculpture belongs to the best, purest, and noblest of our enjoyments; and we feel most reluctant to be separated from those forms from which, however often we contemplate them, we derive renewed and indeed heightened pleasure. However charming beauty and expression may be in living persons, yet, in a perfect statue, such as some of the antiques, both exist to an extent so much greater, so much higher, as to admit of no comparison; and in order to discover this, no particular knowledge is required, but only a naturally correct sense of the beautiful, and a complete surrender of ourselves to this sentiment.

The beauty which a work of art possesses is naturally more unconstrained than nature,—just because it is a work of art. All desire, every inclination of a sensual or selfish character, be it ever so indistinct and remote, is laid aside; we desire to gaze upon it only that we may lose ourselves more and more in its contemplation. We lay no claim to it. The fine remark of Goethe in reference to the stars becomes peculiarly applicable to beauty of this kind:—“The stars which man covets not, he rejoices in their light.”

You will have remarked on the plan some statues arranged in the entrance-hall, and amongst them a female figure without head or arms. This stands there no longer, but is now placed with others in my room. It has been in my possession for a long time, and I had it always beside me at Rome. It is one of the most perfect antique figures which have been preserved, and it would not be easy to find another which gives so pure an idea of strictly feminine beauty.

All the statues which you find represented in the entrance-hall are now standing in the rooms, with the exception of the round vessel in the centre, which still remains in the same place. You will have wondered, and will not have guessed what this represents. It is the top of a well, carved in marble, with a bas-relief encircling it, representing a bacchanalian feast. The notch is yet to be seen gradually worn in the marble by the cord with which the bucket was drawn up. How it found its way into the church of a monastery in Rome heaven only knows. Tradition declares it to belong to the same well in which the holy Pope Calixtus suffered martyrdom, and the water was thought to possess curative properties. Nevertheless the Pope was willing to sell the marble, and I became the purchaser. At first it cost some trouble to obtain leave to remove it from Rome, but the late Pope was very kind to me, and granted me permission. In the hall above my apartment, which contains the principal works of art, there

are three beautiful pillars of the rarest marble, and a Medusa's head, in porphyry, which were presented to me by the Pope. The most elegant of our antiques is a small attired nymph going to fetch water. It stands in a niche of the saloon, near the hall of antiques. I furnish you with these details, dear Charlotte, because they will give you an idea of the interior of the house. It does not contain a single picture;—such as I possess are here in Berlin.

It has rejoiced me exceedingly to find once again in your last letter that calm, cheerful, and trusting nature which was always peculiarly your own. Continue in this state of mind and entertain despondent thoughts no longer. I well know that this is easier said than done, and I am of course well aware that your position leaves much to be desired; but besides the fact that you possess, to an extent but seldom found, a most contented disposition, there is yet another feature in your position which cannot fail to afford you elevated emotions, and must prove a great source of satisfaction. I allude to the fact that you can say, that whatever is pleasing or tranquillizing in your position is the result of your own energies, and that by your own exertions you have both created and secured for yourself the means of an independent existence. The internal traits of character which are necessary to this end, and the talent and activity which must be externally added to them, guarantee for themselves a reward quite distinct from their outward results. What vexes me always is the thought that your nature required a different kind of activity. We must certainly admit that positions in life which appear even the most unsuited to our nature, may develop traits of character which would otherwise have remained latent; and after all it is upon this that everything depends. I particularly approve of those arrangements by which you have secured more tranquillity, for this you particularly require. The want of that which is necessary to our spiritual

nature is, particularly in your case, far more difficult to bear than any worldly privations.

You wish to have my opinion of Walter Scott, and you ask me what works you should read. I am puzzled how to advise you upon this subject. I read but few German books, and these are mostly such scientific works as would be uninteresting to you;—upon this subject I am therefore a particularly bad counsellor. You say that, although it is contrary to the prevailing fashion, you cannot acquire a taste for Scott's romances; that the jail, robber, and tavern scenes, as well as the harrowing tendency of his imagination, produce and leave within you the most disagreeable impressions; and further, that you have not obtained a single elevating idea from the perusal of not a few of his volumes; and you conclude by predicting for them an existence not more enduring than the works of the La Fontaine school. Although I cannot fully acquiesce in these opinions, yet I will not contradict you; I understand that they have produced upon you the effect you describe, and that you will not peruse all of them. I heard some of his romances read aloud in the evening by my wife during my residence in the country, and they afforded me much pleasure. I recommend to you "Guy Mannering," "The Heart of Mid Lothian," and "Ivanhoe," before all others. A most beautiful vitality pervades these romances, and the characters are most correctly delineated and developed. They also contain an additional attraction, for in many of them historical facts are most accurately and truthfully narrated, and the descriptions of the manners and customs of different ages are most faithful and circumstantial.

I always give the preference to historical works as most fitted for reading aloud; and I often think, that if it ever were my lot to have very weak eyes, as frequently happens to those who have strained them much, or if I were to become quite blind, so as to be unable any longer to pursue my own studies, I would then have historical works alone read to me.

In history some are more interested by that which refers to distant periods, whilst others are better pleased with that of more recent times. Should the latter prove the more pleasing to you, a number of interesting "Memoires" have appeared in France within the last few years. I have read but few of them myself, but have heard much of them; and certainly such writings are very interesting.

I look forward with much pleasure to the continuation of your autobiography: it gives me the most lively satisfaction to know that you intend to proceed with it. I repeat with the greatest sincerity my assurances of hearty and unchanging constancy.—Yours,
H.

LETTER LV.

BERLIN, Dec. 1, 1825.

In the interval of time during which I have not written to you, dear Charlotte, I have received and have perused both your letters and also the latter part of your narrative, for both which, and more especially for the last, I particularly thank you. It has given me as much pleasure as the former, and has renewed the gratification which I had derived from its predecessor. The period comprehended in the present part is the most interesting in a woman's life, and this makes the narrative the more pleasing, although it is deficient in what we are accustomed to call "events." The growth of a human mind, the continued and progressively increasing development of its peculiarities, its progress through different gradations, all of which are linked together, and lead the one to the other:—this is itself an event, and, to those who know how to understand and appreciate it, a far greater and more interesting event than any of those changes in worldly circumstances which we are accustomed to call by that name, and which after all act only as external impulses. This internal event, for so we may call it, is simply and naturally represented in this part of your narrative, and in such a way as enables us at once to perceive that it has been conceived with delicacy and acuteness. We see at the same time how you conducted yourself amidst the circumstances by which you were then surrounded: we learn to know those with whom you were related; and we have a vivid picture of interesting social peculiarities belonging to a time long since passed away. If these portraits of men wholly unknown awaken an interest in me, there is associated with it a much more

friendly sympathy towards you; and therefore, as I have often remarked, the continuation of your autobiography will afford me very great pleasure, for which I shall feel most truly thankful.

The description of your former friend Henrietta L—— is excellent, and everything that bears upon her private relations or public life heightens the interest of this part of your narrative, inasmuch as you felt at that time so deep an interest in her, and she exerted consequently no inconsiderable influence upon you. It is, however, pleasing to remark, that this was not such an influence as your friend herself might by her own nature have produced, nor such as she actually exercised in life, but was much rather the influence of your own feelings towards your friend reflected upon yourself. She but gave the occasion of their activity. You may indeed feel surprised that so much confidence and affection should have existed between two persons who differed so much from each other. It is obvious, however, that it was partly the romantic interest excited by her secret passion, combined with your own efforts for her safety, and partly the impression made upon you by her outward appearance, which, however, you regarded with the eye of sensibility and intellect, that bound you to your friend, and made her presence a source to you of such high enjoyment. These two sources of your friendship were conceived in a spirit of equal purity and elevation. I agree with you in the opinion that the latter was true feeling, real feminine affection. In youth, the aspiration after this sentiment develops itself in both sexes,—in the one as in your case, in the other indistinctly and obscurely. And when fortune does not permit the aspiration to meet the object exactly suited to its nature, it passes into other kindred forms of feeling, imparting to them much more of its own hue than it receives of theirs in return. In your case there was the fact superadded to this, that you longed to possess a friend, and that you regarded friendship as the greatest blessing

in life. This sentiment had been raised to the highest pitch by the previous perusal of "Clarissa," whose character you had completely misunderstood in every other respect. You also carried a similar ideal in your mind, and your friend Henrietta was the form to which you transferred it. True friendship could not easily have subsisted between you. Friendship demands perfect harmony in the principal traits of character; and since, as it appears from your narrative, there was the greatest difference both in your views and sentiments, the attempt to form a close intimacy, or to maintain it, would have constantly remained a fruitless task; for it is but seldom found, at least between persons so similar in point of age as you were, and when it does happen, it is necessary that the one should feel an inward necessity of placing himself under the guidance of the other as the superior being. However, love does not exactly receive her impressions from the object,—she rather clothes it herself in the splendour which befits her own nature. What you observed both in the countenance and character of your friend certainly lay within her in the first instance, but they were regarded by you under a form different from the reality, and were veiled by a charm which truly belonged but to your own feelings.

The peculiarity you mention, *i. e.* the desire of contemplating beloved persons during their sleep, contains something remarkably interesting. But even sleep is characteristic. How beautiful are children in their lovely innocence! how angel-like their blooming features!—and how painful and anxious is the sleep of the guilty! Farewell.—With the most affectionate regard, yours,
H.

LETTER LVI.

BERLIN, Dec. 25, 1825.

Since the departure of my letter, dear Charlotte, I have received two from you,—one dated the 6th, the other the 20th of this month—for which I sincerely thank you. I am pleased to find that the engravings of Tegel have given you pleasure. This I both desired and expected—but not that you would have regarded it as a stately castle. The old house, smaller as you will have observed than the present, was a hunting-seat belonging to the great Elector, and came subsequently into our family. From its comparative smallness, and the fact that there is yet another village of Tegel which does not belong to me, it is called in this district the “Little Castle of Tegel;” but the people are now beginning to call it “The Castle,” which is not pleasing to me. I have an old castle in Silesia, which is more than twice as extensive, with towers and trenches, yet I call it the mansion. The house in Tegel is convenient and peculiar in its arrangements. For this I am indebted to the architect, who was left at perfect liberty to exercise his own discretion. My greatest merit in reference to it is that I have not mixed up my own ideas with his.

We are again drawing near to the termination of another year. Write to me, I pray you, on the 3d of January, when we shall have entered upon a new year. The present has been to me a very cheerful and happy one, but it has flown away with astonishing rapidity. It appears as if I had not accomplished, by a great deal, what I had proposed to myself, and what indeed was perfectly practicable. You know quite well, dear good Charlotte, that at all times I feel the sincerest desire for your welfare, and more particu-

larly at the change of the year. I wish above all things that your health, which is frequently so delicate, may improve, and that you may be enabled to maintain a state of mental composure. You may depend with the fullest confidence upon the constancy of the interest which I take in your welfare, and the continuance of every sentiment which you are so kind as to value. I will endeavour with all my power to prove serviceable to you, both in advice and assistance, whenever an opportunity occurs; and it would give me the greatest pleasure if you would manifest towards me, both mentally and in reference to your worldly affairs, even greater confidence than you now do. You would find me constantly the same under all circumstances.

At the commencement of this letter I complained of the rapidity with which time passes; and in reference to my occupations the remark is quite true. Otherwise, I cannot say that this rapidity is either disquieting or displeasing to me. I do not shrink from old age; and, owing to a singular mental disposition, I have always regarded death, perhaps from my youth, not merely as a purely human event, which can never grieve the man who has been accustomed to reflect upon the destiny of mankind, but as a something truly pleasing. My account with the world has long been closed. I desire nothing more from life, neither have I any extensive plans to execute. I receive every enjoyment thankfully from the hand of fate; but I should consider it very foolish to rely upon this continuing much longer. My thoughts and emotions constitute the circle in which I live and through which I derive enjoyment; from without I require scarcely anything; and these thoughts and emotions are too much my own not to accompany me into a future state of existence. No one can remove the veil which Providence has drawn, assuredly with great wisdom, over the future; but certainly the soul cannot but advance in internal freedom, in clear comprehension of the deepest and most exalted subjects, in warmth and purity of feeling;—and must con-

sequently acquire a world of greater excellence and beauty to surround it. A single glance at the immeasurable distance of the starry heavens conveys this to my mind with such consolatory power as he alone can conceive who has in part experienced it;—and thus the termination of life appears to me the most cheerful and the most pleasing period of existence, if free from sickness and pain, which indeed afflict even childhood and youth.

At this season of the year I doubly fear lest in these short days you should exert yourself too much. Take care of your eyes, dear Charlotte, and do not work too late at night. Take particular care of yourself, and remember that I am disturbed by the thought, that with a capacity and a need to live in loftier occupations, you should exert yourself so much for this life. You do not complain;—if you were to do so, it would perhaps affect me less. I also desire that you may soon have more leisure to think of your narrative, which gives me so much pleasure. It appeared to you when you commenced this part of it, that you would never conclude it; but you have already completed the description of your childhood, and if you continue your work with zeal, by and by you will complete it.

* * * * *

You tell me that you would gladly have my views and opinions upon many subjects which you consider of great importance. I am always prepared to give these with pleasure. Tell me at all times and without ceremony whatever presents itself to your mind.

* * * * *

Think of me at the termination of the year, and rest assured that I think of you with the sincerest interest and affection.—Yours,

H.

LETTER LVII.

BERLIN, Feb. 14, 1826.

I thank you most sincerely, dear Charlotte, for your long and circumstantial letter of the 25th and 29th of January. It has afforded me peculiar satisfaction; and the emotions of thankfulness with which I am filled are truly warm and sincere. Its pages again indicate, and with equal warmth, not only a continuance of those affectionate sentiments which I so highly prize, but they are also written in that tranquil and cheerful tone which I regard with so much pleasure. It is not merely a peculiarity in my nature, neither is it one common to my years, which leads me to value mental tranquillity above all things; for it is most true, that wherever it is disturbed, there the harmony of life no longer sounds pure and full,—by this I mean that internal harmony which forms the necessary condition and indeed the true foundation of a happy existence. This is easily understood when the disturbance arises from sorrow, inquietude, or any mental cause of suffering, whatever its nature may be; but I may say, that whenever this tranquillity falls into a state of vacillation through grief or other disturbing causes, or by the violence of an emotion, the spiritual state, although for a moment it may be sweet and pleasing, is yet less beautiful, less exalted, and less accordant with that higher vocation, by which gradually, and in so far as it is permitted to us here, man may cradle himself in the peace and unchangeableness of Heaven. All that is vehement and passionate in its nature partakes more of earth than of heaven; yet to a certain extent I am far from condemning even real passion when it truly springs from the depths of the soul, and is directed towards a good end.

What I assert may be but an evening view of life on the whole. I was never passionate, but at an early period of my life I held it as a maxim to conquer, by the force of my will, whatever evil emotions nature had implanted within me; and although this has not always been effected without difficulty, yet I have never failed to accomplish my purpose. But however this may be, I regard tranquillity, and the disposition which produces and proceeds from it, as far more salutary and always far better calculated to render us happy, than a more excited state, whatever its nature may be; and therefore, as I take the sincerest interest in you and your happiness, nothing can be more pleasing to me than the recognition of this state in your letters.

You have not said, dear Charlotte, whether you contemplate a continuation of the narrative of your life; but in the meantime I hope you do. Once for all, however, know how I think upon this subject. I trust that you will continue it, and carry it on to its completion. I always read it with great interest and with most lively satisfaction, but I will not be troublesome to you, if generally, or at particular times, you should derive no pleasure from this occupation.

I cannot say, as you assert, that I commenced this correspondence with you in order to be able to know you more thoroughly. I always turn with pleasure to the contemplation of the past; and in my recollections of you and of my first acquaintance with you, and in our earlier correspondence, there is sufficient cause for this new relation without requiring any other. This, however, is certain, that during its continuance, both the amount of interest and the pleasure arising from the renewal of our correspondence must be greatly confirmed and increased by the openness with which you have permitted me to look into your heart, and to read the events of your life. I am always most sincerely and deeply thankful for the way in which you have done this; and it is certain, as must afterwards appear, that you

will be a great gainer thereby. This will be readily understood by you and by all who are conscious of the purity of their sentiments and emotions; but I may in general assert besides, that if we knew thoroughly the whole tissue of the thoughts, sensations, and inclinations of a man, many inequalities would be smoothed down, and we should constantly find that very much of that which, when viewed alone, we should condemn, or at least regard with strong disapprobation, would be then readily tolerated, and even excused by us.

You mention in your last letter having employed the Cadet de Vaux's method of cure; but you add that you have not fully carried it out. This I can believe; for, as I have been assured and can easily imagine, it is shockingly offensive—so much so, that but few have employed it to its full extent. Of course you mean that plan of cure which consists in drinking water as hot as it can be taken, at very short intervals, and for as long a time as it can be borne, until the malady disappears. Tell me exactly how you have employed it, how much you have drank within a given time, and at what intervals, and how it has affected you. I am sorry to perceive, that although for some time your health was benefited by its use, nevertheless your indisposition has reappeared. I am convinced that this method is remarkably efficacious. Here I have heard of many instances in which obstinate diseases have been completely cured by it; yet this is not sufficient to entitle us to say that it would prove universally beneficial.

You remark that the vulgar belief that misfortune may be provoked is not wholly without foundation. This superstition is very ancient, and one which is almost universally disseminated; yet I do not myself entertain it: you may constantly call me happy, without awakening in my mind any presentiment of evil. A deeper idea, however, lies at the bottom of this superstition. To laud fortune, and especially one's own fortune, is almost universally regarded

as indicative either of an assumed exemption from the mutability of human affairs, or as allied to arrogance and opposed to modesty and proper feeling. Hence the thought has arisen that punishment follows this vain-gloriousness; and the frequent experience of such vicissitudes has given an apparent sanction to the idea. This has induced in timid persons, and such as are filled with horror at the thought of vain-gloriousness, a feeling which leads them to conceal, or at least to say but little about their happiness, lest fate might be reminded that it was time to produce a change in their lot. In reference to others, there is conjoined with it the feeling of envy, and of pleasure in the misfortunes of others; and many have been led to fear that the praise bestowed upon their happiness was not sincere, but secretly intended to produce a change in their circumstances. Owing to this, the laudation of a man's fortune came to be considered as a charm, and men foolishly resorted to the opposite course as a means of protection. Before enlightened and religious thought, this falls wholly to the ground. He who lauds his own fortune or that of another, from pure joy therein and thankfulness towards its Author, is certainly acceptable to God, and does not thereby regard any change in the light of a punishment, if it be not already intended as such by the inscrutable plans of Providence. It is much rather a truly noble feeling which leads a man to praise the happiness of others without envy, and to regard his own as an unmerited gift.

I see from yours, that on this day you will have despatched a letter for me; but as I shall not receive it in less than three days, I think it will prove more pleasing to you if I do not to keep back my own letter until its arrival. It will be very gratifying to me if you tell me something about your occupation. You know I take an interest in everything which concerns you, and therefore I sincerely and heartily desire that your description may be a detailed one.

I beg of you to write to me next on the 28th of February. Now, dear Charlotte, farewell.—With feelings of unchangeable affection, yours,
H.

LETTER LVIII.

BERLIN, March 3, 1826.

Dear Charlotte, your two letters of the 13th and 26th of the preceding month are lying before me for answer. You can scarcely imagine how much pleasure I have derived from the calm and trustful tone which reigns in both of them, and which is a true expression of your disposition and frame of mind. It has also very much delighted me to observe that your health appears to be tolerably good. It is a great gain that you have found the Cadet de Vaux's cure on a second trial not only possible but practicable. I know persons in whom the hot water has produced so much nausea as to have compelled them to relinquish its use; and in others it has caused such a determination of blood to the head as to give reason to fear an attack of apoplexy. But, on the other hand, I know examples here, both of men and women, who, like yourself, have taken it without suffering any great inconvenience, and have been perfectly cured.

However, I have no particular motive in questioning you as to the use you have made of this method of cure. I merely asked you to write to me upon this subject, because everything interests me which relates to yourself and your health; and because this method has attracted my attention on account of the various opinions which are entertained of its merits, and I have met with both zealous adherents and violent opposers of the system. What your letter contains is perfectly satisfactory to me upon this subject, and I thank you heartily for it. In your case the simple and regular mode of life you lead certainly contributes much to an easy triumph over all disease, and with this you conjoin such an

amount of perseverance as is certainly but seldom to be found. It is incredible how important it is that the corporeal frame should be kept under the influence of constant, continuous, and unbroken order, and free from the impressions of vicissitude, which always more or less derange the corporeal functions. After all, it is continued temperance which sustains the body for the longest period of time, and which most surely preserves it free from sickness. In your case, dear Charlotte, there is but one thing in excess, from which it would give me much pleasure to know you had nothing to fear. It is work. I have seen with the greatest pleasure that you contemplate procuring additional assistance and some repose for yourself. You are quite right; but I have clearly perceived that even that portion of work which you have retained is yet too much for your individual strength. If, as you inform me, you are continually compelled to work until deep into the night—till one or two o'clock—and yet to get up at six in the morning, the exertion is certainly too great. It is true I generally remain up until one in the morning, and now while I am writing to you it is near midnight; but then I do not rise until eight in the morning, and during an hour or two before going to rest I choose only light and unlaborious occupations. In general I only write letters, or attend to my own personal affairs: purely scientific, or any other fatiguing occupation, I always reserve for the day, and generally for the morning.

The whole of the description which you have given me of your interesting, and, under circumstances which made a choice requisite, well-chosen occupation, and the return which it makes, has filled me with the greatest interest. It is truly astonishing to remark, as you have set it down for my inspection upon the little leaf of paper, that from the year 1820 to 1825, that is, in six years, you have tripled your income. It reflects the greatest honour not only upon your activity and perseverance, but also upon your taste

and talents. What you must now strive to effect is, that it may be no longer necessary for you to work with your own hands, but to confine yourself to arranging and overlooking the work of others, otherwise you run great risk of suffering both in health and profit. I earnestly entreat you to give your attentive consideration to this point.

It is very kind and good of you to have reperused the series of my last year's letters; but I am sorry that you should have lingered over those which were displeasing to you. There was no advantage in this. It was entirely a misunderstanding, which both of us may now allow to fall quietly to the ground. It must prove far more important for you, and, with your sentiments towards me, far more tranquillizing to you, to know that no feeling which I ever entertained towards you is changed or will change, and that you may always rely upon my interest and affection. Without intending it as a reproach, it is yet certain, and appears in your letters, that upon this subject you still create for yourself many useless cares and troubles. This vexes me, for it interferes with that quiet cheerfulness you might otherwise enjoy, although I know how to honour the feeling which leads to it. You may always rely with certainty upon me, and upon my sympathy and willingness to assist you; for at my time of life it is impossible that passion, which is always uncertain, should any longer exist within me, and in my character there is not, neither has there ever been, any caprice. As I am towards you, so shall I constantly remain. I see also with emotion that even now, as formerly, your uneasiness sometimes arises from a fear lest there should be anything in your expressions displeasing to me. Nothing of this kind dwells within my soul, which is directed towards you with feelings of the deepest sympathy. If you would give me a proof of your readiness to render me a pleasure, then let this subject rest, and never again mention it. You may speak to me freely upon all subjects; I take an interest in the smallest as well as in the greatest,

and I will always advise you upon all things with calmness, judgment, and heartfelt sympathy. I will examine them with you, and will promote both your internal tranquillity and your outward prosperity as far as my power will permit. In our correspondence I earnestly strive to understand your thoughts, and to develop and declare my own, whether they agree or not. This is the chief privilege of a correspondence which has no reference to external events, but is confined to the communication of thoughts and opinions. But I am by no means so presumptuous as to suppose that I am always in the right; and when I express an opinion, I do not demand your concurrence. I rather freely court the expression of opposite opinions. Now, dear Charlotte, regard my position in reference to you in this light, and seek to acquire and preserve undisturbed confidence, contentment, and cheerfulness, combined with that tranquillity which every period of life requires, and which, as I feel in my own case, is so beneficial in more advanced years.

I must travel into Silesia for some weeks—I know not for how long—upon matters of business. I beg you to write to me again on the 26th, under the usual address—Ottmachau, near Neisse, in Upper Silesia, care of Mr. A. M.

Farewell.—With the most affectionate regards, yours,

H.

LETTER LIX.

OTTMACHAU, April 10, 1826.

I arrived here to-day, dear Charlotte, and found your kind letter, which must have been lying here a long time; for though I left Berlin on the 29th of March, I visited several places before I came here. The last visit I paid was to a relative, a play-fellow of my childhood, now a widow, who resides in a large castle in a mountainous district, with her two sons, one of whom is married. It is a pleasant place, attractive both from the beauties of nature and on account of its inmates, and I enjoyed myself there very much.

The weather has been here much the same as you say it has been with you, raw and wet. But the last three days have been beautiful; to-day is almost as warm as summer. I was out at five o'clock, and as I came slowly from the deep valley where my kinswoman's castle lies, I saw the rays of the sun become brighter, until at length they seemed to rest on and to illuminate the beautiful region so vividly that the outlines of the most distant mountain ranges became visible. But this evening it is quite cloudy; at this season such warm weather never continues. During the whole of last winter I was very seldom—not more than a couple of days—in the country, and so it is quite new to me to be in deep solitude again. For I have brought none of my family with me, and live quite alone in the house, having but one servant who is lodged at a distance from me. It is like the quietness of the grave. This is never painful to me; indeed it is rather congenial to my inclinations and feelings, and I sit up late that I may increase my sense of the solitude of the place by adding to it the solitude of the night.

I know young Rose well, and like him much. He is amiable, industrious, and endowed with considerable talents, and is really altogether a well informed young man: he will accomplish much. It would have given me great pleasure if he had introduced your nephew to me. I have always maintained the principle, that at every age and in every situation we should be accessible, and I never turn even a stranger away. There is in this a mutual advantage: a living man is always a point of interest to which others are related, and we can never know when or how some pleasant results may arise from such an acquaintance. But those who are employed in scientific pursuits, even if they be but in the commencement of their career, always excite a higher interest than other men, and with them we readily enter upon subjects which are foreign to our own mode of life and education. For indeed all things that can be embraced by ideas are connected together, even if it be only in their most elevated and general points; and intercourse with individuals of different degrees of cultivation, always supposing it has reached a certain height, has a remarkably enlivening influence on the mind, and puts a stop to that one-sided view of things which those seldom escape who have not mixed in life with men of all positions, and been rich in experience of their own.

You are wrong, dear Charlotte, when you say that I have assumed towards you a tone of complaisance, always approving of what you say. This is not the case with respect to my feelings; and my last letter, in which I was quite at issue with you, will have shown you that I do not always sympathize in your sentiments and agree with your notions. This shows you plainly that I examine all your views and ideas. Certainly it happens more frequently that after a thorough examination I do completely agree with your opinions; then I am glad to express this, and I allude particularly to the agreement, because I not only think but feel sure that it gives you pleasure. This is the case with

whatever has reference to the substance of your opinions, feelings, and wishes. The form of our intercourse at least is certainly free from the constraint of courtliness, from all premeditation; but with us the wish clothes itself in a request, and contradiction, when it does occur, is smoothed and deprived of all its harshness. All this is natural in a relation founded upon similarity of character. The true, upright, and heartfelt interest which I take in you and your fate, dear Charlotte, gives assurance that this sincerity will find faithful utterance, and avoid that tone of coldness which a certain courtliness is sure to induce. I heartily dislike this coldness wherever the relation is anything but one of pure and absolute indifference, and I admit it only in business and the intercourse of everyday life. Beyond these spheres,—out of which, besides, we should keep ourselves as much as possible,—I have no patience with this coldness, which is always found united with emptiness and vacuity. But in that sort of politeness which takes nothing from confidence and sincerity, I go perhaps farther than others. This is innate with me, and if any one sees me with my daughters, he would scarcely discover me to be their father, did I not use the term “thou” in speaking to them. I do not mean by this manner to be less familiar; I have no reason for it, but I can scarcely do otherwise.

I will here conclude. Unfortunately I cannot give you any precise address for your next letter: I remain for too short a time to enable me to receive one here. But I must ask you to have the letter written, and to send it off as soon as you hear again from me. This may be after my return to Berlin, or sooner if I can calculate the time of my return with accuracy.

With sentiments of the sincerest attachment, yours,
H.

LETTER LX.

GLOGAU, May 9, 1826.

My journey, dear Charlotte, has been delayed longer than I expected, but I am now on my return to Berlin, and write to you from this place, as I arrived early and shall spend the night here. It is long since I received a letter from you. I regretted it very much, but it was impossible for me to fix any address by which it would have been sure to reach me. My place of abode was continually changing, and although I remained a fortnight at Ottmachau, I did not foresee that, my business there being unexpectedly delayed day after day. Now I can ask you, dear Charlotte, to write to me on the 23d of this month, as the letter will certainly meet me at Berlin, where you can address it as usual. I hope that such an interruption to our correspondence will not again occur, as I am very unwilling to be deprived of your letters and intelligence of you.

I feared that the cold ungenial weather might have disagreed with you. It has been here at least—in Silesia, I mean—very raw and unseasonable. I hear the same complaint from Berlin, but there has been a change during the last three or four days, and to-day there was a warm, bright sun, which accompanied me on my journey until evening. The heavens and the earth presented a striking contrast. The air was serene, the sky blue, with light clouds here and there, and the sun obscured only for a few moments. The earth, on the contrary, had no such pleasing aspect. I was obliged to cross the Oder in a ferry-boat, and my road led me for some hours along the bank of the stream, which I left here for the first time. Yesterday and the day before the river had risen to an unusual height, large fields were

inundated—villages deserted—the inhabitants everywhere endeavouring to restrain the flood, to raise the dikes, and taking precautions of every kind. No serious accident was likely to happen, as the wide expanse of water, except the current of the river itself, was calm and peaceful. The appearance of the bushes just rising above the water was very singular. There has not been such a flood since the year 1813. The ungenial cold season has probably occasioned an accumulation of snow upon the high mountains, and the warmth of the few preceding days has brought on too sudden a thaw. So at least this inconceivably rapid swelling of the waters is explained here. The inundation will of course be mentioned in the newspapers, and you will read an account of it.—But whilst writing this it occurs to me, dear Charlotte, that it is possible you read no newspapers. I should think this very probable if I judged you by myself. Since I left Berlin on the 29th of March I have really seen no newspapers, if I except two sheets which came accidentally into my hands. My life can progress inwardly and outwardly, without coming into contact with what are called public events. If really great events happen, and the information concerning them is certain, we hear it all without reading the papers; and to gather up trivial facts, or to trace even important events from their origin, has no great interest for me, and soon exhausts my patience. Even in events by which whole states are affected, and which become matters of history, that which is really important is what has reference to the activity, the mind, and the feelings of individual men. Man is preëminently the centre of it all, and each man thus remains alone even to the end, so that that only which is in him and which proceeds from him can be of any importance to him. Man during his life on earth, sympathizing and active, is ever a sharer of the emotions of others; yet he treads alone the more important path that leads over the confines of the earthly state, and no one can accompany him there, al-

though in every man's soul the hope exists that beyond the grave he will find again those who went before him, and will there gather around him again those whom he leaves behind. No man endowed with feeling can be without this anticipation, this firm faith, without giving up a large share of his happiness, and that the purest and noblest. And this trust is justified also by Holy Writ. Yes, it may be considered as an established truth, belonging to the religion of Christ so rich in consolation.

But this in no way alters what I said at first. I meant that here upon earth everything which relates to others, and generally to our artificially appointed institutions, is of real advantage to man only so far as it enters into individual character. Every step in civilisation, every improvement in worldly business and arrangements, every advancement of the state and of the world itself, remains purely ideal, in so far as it is not expressed in the lives of individual men; and therefore in all, even the greatest public events, I look to the individual and his power of thinking, feeling, and acting. The universality of the event only causes it to influence many at once, or by such an influence to originate many others,—and the greatness of the event only consists in its setting in motion extraordinary powers or being the product of such. Thus private and public life are connected. What in *this* is remarked of individuals, is also to be found in *that*, brought into play by other motives and exciting to other actions. It is only the theatre which is changed: the drama, the subject in which we delight, remains the same. When one thus contemplates public events, they gain, at least in my view, a higher and more lively interest. But newspapers cannot, properly speaking, furnish this, or only very seldom.

In reference to what I said with regard to meeting again after death, an affecting verse occurs to me which I met with a few days since in walking in a village churchyard. A woman—a mother and grandmother—was represented

talking with her children and grandchildren, and praying for them, and the prayer concluded with these words:—“Keep them, O God! from misfortune, and bring them after me in peace!” This expression has something remarkably simple and striking in it. I think that both phrases are taken from some old book of hymns, which in general contain more beautiful pieces than the modern collections,—and they are perhaps well known to you.

I have a peculiar predilection for churchyards, and seldom go near one without visiting it. I like those particularly which are planted with large old trees. Fresh green life is so beautifully associated with the slumbering dead! The most picturesque churchyards of this sort I ever saw are in Königsberg in Prussia. They have whole rows of the finest and most magnificent lime-trees. I spent a part of the year 1809 in Königsberg, and rarely omitted to walk in these churchyards on the fine summer evenings. In Rome there is one for foreigners who are not of the Roman Catholic persuasion, also very beautiful, which contains an ancient pyramid and a monument, which stood by chance upon the spot chosen for the cemetery. I shall not remain long at Berlin, but shall hasten as soon as possible to Tegel, partly because I like the place and am there surrounded by what I love, and partly because of the undisturbed quiet in which I can work there. When travelling and changing one's residence, one does very little, and the sort of activity in which one can engage is, for the mind, properly speaking, mere indolence.

Farewell, dear Charlotte.—With sincere sympathy and unchangeable attachment,

H.

LETTER LXI.

BERLIN.

I am very well, but very busy, as I think I am going to complete undertakings which have been in progress for years. I have laid down a regular plan for the next year, and shall devote all my leisure time to this, as I have done for some weeks past.

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The weather is more beautiful than we often have it in this northern climate of ours: it has a cheerful effect alike upon mind and body, and we are more than usually disposed to intellectual activity. It is certainly an enviable advantage of the southern latitudes that a more equable temperature is there maintained. But in another view this equality of Nature is unpleasant, and is perhaps prejudicial in regard to mental occupations. The return of spring is not so eagerly and impatiently expected, as the winter is not so dissimilar to it as here. This naturally has its effect upon the soul; and if one can suppose, as I at least do, that every passionate or deep emotion has its origin in the impressions of great external nature, without our being able to remark it in individual cases, so it may be supposed that earnest desire cannot, in the minds and hearts of the residents in the south, take such deep root as with us, where from our childhood every year brings back to us the eager wish to mark the fresh green awakening of nature from the dull torpidity and decay of winter. But as nothing stands alone in the soul, this must also affect our whole tone of feeling,—and thence it may arise that in our poets everything is coloured in contrasts—masses of shade in opposition to the light,—that much is really darker and duller, but

also deeper and more striking, and seems, upon even the slightest occasion, to withdraw from the light of external nature into the darkness and solitude of the mind within. The strength of the emotion and passion which there flames like fire, has here another species of ardour,—one consuming more inwardly, and wasting away slowly. This emotion, this earnest desire, is increased by our always, in this climate which offers so few charms, looking towards the other as to a paradise which is denied to us, at least for a long-continued residence. This induces in all who are chiefly engaged in intellectual occupations another strong desire, which is unknown to few;—for even one who feels well here, and has never seen another climate, cannot but be aware that there is one more beautiful and more richly endowed in every way. Yet there may be associated with this a feeling that he would not wish to exchange his residence,—he may find here an indemnification, in things which there he would be obliged to resign,—but there is still the consciousness that the less beautiful has fallen to his share; and, from this consciousness, a desire, at least for the moment, cannot be separated. This is expressed by all German and English poets, when the subject gives opportunity. If we may compare great things with small, it has a resemblance to the earnest desire for an existence free from all physical limitations which is present in every highly-toned mind,—without, however, being accompanied by any wish to leave the present life.

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One-sidedness is something wholly relative, and in the man who should apply himself to a great multitude of objects, it may be a ground for apprehension. But women have the good fortune, as it may well be called, of being able to remain strangers to many things: for the most part they have this advantage, that they can contract the circle of their perceptions and emotions into less compass and greater depth, and with them this one-sidedness is not so

blameable as with men. I remember knowing formerly two women who, furnished with every means of leading an active life, out of pure inclination, and without being forced into it by misfortune, preserved a solitude so deep that it was difficult for any one to approach them;—and they certainly had not lost in point of interest by this.

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You mention with reprehension many vices in certain connections and consequences, and wish my opinion on the subject. I confess that I cannot agree with or approve of the opinion which *dissects* morality into individual virtues, opposite to which are placed individual vices. It appears to me a false and perverted view. I cannot say whether I should most dislike the arrogant, the avaricious, the extravagant, or the sensual man. It might be any of them according to circumstances, for it depends greatly on the way in which the particular vice is exhibited. I found my opinion of men upon their dispositions, as the groundwork of all thoughts, designs, and actions, and upon the general tone of mind and heart. As these are conformable to duty or opposed to it, noble or ignoble, my opinion is formed. If two or three men have in an equal degree an unworthy, selfish, mean tone of mind, it is indifferent to me what particular form of vice is the outward sign of it: the one or the other may be more offensive or more unbecoming, but all vices are equally sinful and pitiable. It is the same with virtues: one may commit no immorality, and may practise many virtues; and another, on the contrary, may err through pride or impetuosity; and yet it is very possible that the latter may foster a higher and nobler tone of mind;—and him I should prefer. But the disposition depends upon two points: upon the idea according to which a man is good, and upon the strength of will through which he brings that idea to bear against the licence or passion of his natural tendency. The most pitiable men are those who have no command over themselves, who cannot

do what they would, and who, even whilst they perform virtuous actions, do so from low motives, such as reference to happiness and contentment, fear of the reproaches of conscience or of future punishment. These motives are very good and useful if men can be preserved from sin by no other means; but he who looks to the heart and soul can have no satisfaction in them. True nobleness exists only when the good is sought for its own sake, either as a recognised law of pure duty, or from the feeling of the exalted dignity and constraining beauty of virtue. These motives alone show the disposition to be great and noble, and these alone re-act upon the character. If, as is the case with every well-disposed mind, religion enters the field, it also may act in a two-fold manner. From a low point of view, Religion can neither be felt nor attained in her true greatness. He who serves God only with reference to himself, in order that he may receive protection, help, and blessing in return, or that he may demand from Him special interference in every event of life, makes himself again the centre-point of all. But he who with reverential adoration and deep thankfulness has so imbibed the ideas of the greatness and the paternal goodness of God that he rejects everything that is not in accordance with the purest and noblest tone of mind, and with the thought that what duty and virtue require from him is likewise the will of the Highest and the demand of the invariable laws of Nature, —this man has indeed a truly religious and virtuous disposition.

* * * *

I shall look with great pleasure for the continuation of the account of your life in a few days. Fare you well. —
With unchangeable, sympathizing attachment, yours,

H.

LETTER LXII.

TEGEL, Sept. 10, 1826.

I have received your letter, dearest Charlotte, with the new part of the narrative of your life which I have been so impatiently expecting, and I thank you sincerely for it. There are indeed but a few pages, embracing a short but important period, but I have read them, not only with great interest, but with sincere sympathy.

You had told me before that when I became acquainted with you at Pymont you were engaged to be married, but that the engagement was not publicly declared. I was much surprised at this;—I had not the slightest idea of it when we met. The manner in which this connection was formed has certainly something very peculiar and remarkable. But whatever may be said and thought on such occasions, it certainly appears, as you very justly remark, that an eternal destiny governs the connection of events, so that no one can avoid the fate which is to prepare him for his higher destination, upon which it properly speaking depends. I am quite of your opinion that it is not to be supposed that Providence should vouchsafe to care for what we call happiness and misery. Depressing as this may appear at first sight, it is at the same time elevating to think that we are esteemed worthy of a higher improvement. There is an extraordinary chain of events in such destinies as yours began so early to be. Even when we are not urged on by others, and cannot clearly say what impulse urges us on, we may yet approach an object, or draw a destiny upon ourselves, whilst we have almost a feeling that it would have been better to have repelled it. It really appears that you have done less to involve yourself in the fate which was

prepared for you, than that you have borne it for the love of your friend, and have not struggled against it. The case is very common in which without any inclination, or even in opposition to inclination, from a variety of reasons, such connections are entered into with feelings which in themselves are certainly not blameworthy, but which should not be the leading ones in such a step. This is hardly conceivable to me. According to my mode of thinking, it would be quite impossible to entertain an idea of such a connection, unless I had the assured conviction that the one to whom I was to be united was the only one with whom I could enter into such an engagement. The thought of marriage contracted in a very good and amiable manner—with mutual regard and friendship, but without that deep feeling pervading the whole being, which is generally called love—was always objectionable to me, and it would be in opposition to my whole nature to act in such a manner. It is certainly true that only in marriages entered into in the way I describe, do the feelings remain the same till death, with those modifications only which are necessarily induced by age and circumstances. At the same time it is as well that this view of things is not common, as then there would be few marriages. So many marriages also are prosperous which in the beginning do not promise well, that much cannot be said against them. In your case it was evidently consideration for your friend that guided you, and this was no doubt a noble feeling arising from the best and purest emotions of the human heart. But it frequently happens that the best, the noblest, and most self-sacrificing feelings are those which lead to unfortunate destinies. It is as if, by a high and wise ordination, the external fate were intentionally brought into opposition to the inward emotions in order that the latter may attain a higher value, may shine in greater purity, and to him who cherishes them become dearer through deprivation and suffering. However beneficently Providence orders all things, yet it has not always or exclusively regard to the happiness of man.

It has always higher aims, and acts in preference upon the inward feelings and tone of mind.*

The history of the ghost-like warning is very wonderful,—it would be so to you at the moment when you first signified your consent to a union which involved you in infinite suffering. Still more wonderful too was it as an announcement of the death of your mother.†

It cannot be denied that you did really hear yourself called. It is equally certain that no mortal man called you in the entirely secluded solitude in which you heard the warning voice. In *yourself* you heard the voice which appeared to you to strike your external ear, and in you the voice resounded. There are no doubt many who would explain this as self-delusion—who think that a man may, in a natural manner, and without any contact of the earthly with the spiritual, but merely through an inward emotion which affects his mind, his imagination, his blood itself, believe that he perceives something external to himself. That it may be so, and sometimes is so, I cannot deny, nor that with certain men in certain circumstances it has been otherwise. You say that you have latterly adopted the opinion which is laid down by Jung-Stilling in his Theory of the Doctrine of Spirits (I have not read the work), that those who have gone before us, being possessed of clearer powers of mental vision, encompassing us with love, and often wishing to protect us, seek to make themselves known to us for the purposes of warning; and that in order to effect a deeper impression upon us, they avail themselves of some significant and important event; whence it arises that they are able to place themselves *en rapport* with us, and this depends upon the degree in which the spiritual condition is free from the influences of the external senses. In

* What follows must of course be quite unintelligible without the connection, but the inferences are too beautiful to be omitted.

† She died exactly a week after, at exactly the same period of the day that the warning voice had been heard.

this free condition, into which no one can bring himself at will, you perhaps believe yourself to have been in that frame of mind when, setting aside all ordinary considerations, you wrote down the conclusions at which you had arrived. These remarks of yours have been deeply thought over and felt. Undoubtedly there is a quiet, mysterious presence not comprehended by earthly senses, which surrounds us without our being aware of it; and why should not this veil be raised for a moment and give a transient view of what in this life leaves no perceptible trace? You were here in a moment warned how you should write down a thought till now known only to yourself,—to make one stroke of the pen, which should involve your life in many unhappy embarrassments. You were warned by the voice which was soon to be no more, and, as you remark, in order to lead you more certainly to reflect upon it, the precise moment was significantly marked, for your mother died a week afterwards at that very moment. Manifestly it was not of this world. It was one of those signs which are sometimes, although seldom, made to us from a region separated from us during this life by an impassable gulf. I thank you very much that you have not omitted mention of this.

It is quite evident that you have fatigued yourself too much in order to complete what you have undertaken to do. Whilst I honour very highly your perseverance, I am very much concerned. I beg that you will spare yourself. I would willingly assist you. I should like to know that you had more leisure, which you have a right to on every account. I always feared you would not be able to undertake any extension of your employment,—it requires more mercantile talent and more youthful powers. It is certainly better to remain as formerly in a limited sphere of activity.

I must ask you to write to me on the 26th. Adieu for to-day, dearest Charlotte.—With unchangeable sympathy and attachment, yours,
H.

LETTER LXIII.

TEGEL, October 1826.

Your long letter of the 16th of September has been in my hands for several days. It has given me very great joy, and it has been very agreeable to me to perceive from it, that mine has given you the material for active thought, and consoling, elevating, and cheerful emotions. I myself live little or not at all in external objects;—except in scientific matters, which properly claim all my activity, I have seldom much to do with others on my own account. Thus, whatever principles, maxims, and views of life I entertain, originate in the strictest sense out of *myself*, and so I conceive that, as you say of some ideas contained in my last letter, much in my modes of thought must be new to others. There is no merit in a higher or deeper insight: it arises merely from the exclusiveness with which, I may literally say, except my scientific occupations, I live with myself and am occupied with myself alone. One who resided with me might perhaps find in my life a sort of contradiction to this expression. For my outward position obliges me to see many people, and partly, with them and partly at a distance, to enter into their position and requirements, and for the time to occupy myself with them, even if they are not near me. But I have attained a habit, that this scarcely or not at all disturbs or interrupts me in my inward life; that I can often even continue my own train of thought whilst I carry on a long conversation without having any appearance of absence of mind.

You ask me, dear Charlotte, what I meant when I said that the voice which called you that November evening sounded *within you*, when you perceived it distinctly *behind*

you. A thing of this kind cannot be properly explained, and I cannot certainly assume my views to be perfectly correct; but I have, respecting what are called spirits and apparitions, a faith which, if I may so speak, combines in a certain measure both belief and unbelief. I believe that men may both hear and see, and perceive in various ways such appearances, and that these are not merely the fancies of a heated imagination, deceptions, and (so to speak) waking dreams. I should scarcely be surprised to experience something of the sort myself. I maintain then that these appearances are something actual, produced by a supernatural power, but that every one must examine closely whether in his own case the appearance be one really differing from his usual train of ideas, and not merely a deviation from this train of ideas, or a mere representation of fancy. On the other hand, I do not believe that such tones or forms pass externally before the individual who perceives them, as if a living man called or appeared. I am therefore somewhat incredulous with regard to those stories in which a noise is said to be heard by many. If there are only two, the similarity of the state of mind may account for the same thing appearing to both, and at the same time. I consider such appearances as have no particularly strong evidence to the contrary, as inward, but inward in this way—that they have been awakened and brought into the mind by a supernatural power, and therefore the man who experiences them, because he is conscious of some supernatural presence and of some influence not arising from himself, necessarily supposes them to be external to himself. However many debates there may have been on these subjects, it cannot be denied that something really internal may be considered by the individual who experiences it as something external; and the creation of such an appearance is just as possible to a higher power, if it be in fact in a certain measure corporeal, as if it were merely ideal.

The thought of an evil power would be very uncongenial

to me. I could never sympathize with the representations which suppose the existence of such a being, hostile to everything good, and finding pleasure only in evil. I consider such passages in the New Testament as merely figurative expressions in accordance with the notions of Judaism, and as referring to the evil with which man, however good he may be, and however conscious of innocence, has always to struggle within himself. Undoubtedly there are persons who meet with more adverse than favourable fortunes, and even the very happy have shorter or longer periods when the course of events does not favour them, and they are obliged to swim against the stream. But this, even where it is no fault of ours, nor the consequence of any ill-calculated procedure on our part, often arises from the natural chain of events, where universal or inevitable necessity is frequently opposed to the interests of the individual. Very often—and this seems to me far more probable—it may be the arrangement of a wise and beneficent Providence, designed to prove and correct us; for the chastisement of a heavenly and superhuman wisdom does not always presuppose guilt. It may be consistent with the ways and means of a discernment stretching far beyond all human wisdom, to chasten even the guiltless, in order to bring them back to perfect purity. Even the best, if he perform the task of self-examination with the requisite strictness, is not free from stain, and there may be amongst his unconscious emotions some that would lead him into sin if not restrained by wholesome chastisement. Man himself is too shortsighted, and his view too dim, to perceive this, but the Power that rules on high penetrates it, and knows how to turn it to the best account. All this I am accustomed to say to myself, often without any outward occasion, but particularly when, as sometimes happens to me, fate works in opposition to my wishes, and a period of adversity or real unhappiness occurs. I am then more cautious than usual in action, and without being in the least depressed or grieved,

I endeavour to steer through as well as I can. When I say without being grieved, I do not mean that the individual misfortunes would not vex me—that is inevitable;—but only that I should consider their occurrence—the transition from happiness to its opposite—not as something malevolent, but as something natural, in strict accordance with the course of things and with human nature, and often productive of blessing. According to this firmly established faith, I cannot believe in a malevolent superhuman power, or even in one that tempts to evil. I confess that I could never hear such an opinion from others without endeavouring to combat it. It is a gloomy, narrow conception, contradicted alike by the goodness of God, the greatness of Nature, and the dignity of Man. On the contrary, the belief in a subordinate protecting power, existing by the permission and subject to the guidance of the Highest, has in it something beautiful, peaceful, and consonant with the purest and most refined religious ideas. I would therefore deprive no one of this faith who by his nature was disposed to hold and cherish it. It is not, however, an idea which I myself entertain; and in any case it belongs to those religious conceptions which are not universally inculcated, but which depend upon the individual disposition and frame of mind.

It will give me great pleasure when you have time and inclination to continue the narrative of your life. Farewell, and calculate with certainty upon the continuance of the sentiments which will always be cherished by me. Yours,
H.

LETTER LXIV.

BERLIN, Nov. 8, 1826.

You see by the date of this letter, dear Charlotte, that I have left the country and returned to town. I should have done so a week sooner, had not unusual delays occurred. I always leave the country unwillingly;—even in the winter it has its charms, and I am sorry to lose the sight of the marble statues and casts which surround me at Tegel. At the same time, other domestic circumstances prevent my remaining the whole winter in the country. Upon the whole, my life here is more secluded than even in the country, for there I am more in the open air. We have our pictures too in town;—for in order not to be without both at the same time, we leave the pictures here the whole year, as the statuary is always at Tegel.

Your kind letter has given me great pleasure, because it enters into the subject of my last, and because you oppose the reasonings contained in it. It is very natural and conceivable that our views should sometimes differ. This arises first from the difference of sex, and also from the manner of life, and our adopted habits. A man, and particularly one who has often been in circumstances in which he has been obliged to seek within himself for safety and counsel against danger and difficulty, must value independence more highly, and put greater trust in it. He must rely upon himself, endure more, regard with more indifference sorrow and misfortune (from which no man is free, and to which business and the responsibilities undertaken for others give more frequent occasion than the simpler relations of private life), in order to be able to subdue them through his own strength. At the same time you must

never imagine that this self-reliance weakens our sympathy in the misfortunes of others, or that it hinders us from seeing that every one accepts the various events of life in his own way and according to his own peculiar temperament. But although you differ from me upon many of the points mentioned in my last letter, we quite agree in the wish to have some sign of approaching death. Hitherto I have always thought of death as a friendly visitant,—one that would be welcome to me at any time, because, however contentedly and happily I may live, this life has always something limited and enigmatical, and the tearing asunder of the earthly veil must bring to us at once more enlarged views and the solution of the previous mystery. For this reason, I could gaze for hours at the starry heavens, because the immensity of the distant shining worlds seems to me like a bond between this and a future existence. I trust that this cheerful expectation of death will remain with me; and I should consider this certain, since it is deeply founded in my nature (which has never clung to the material, but always to thoughts, ideas, and pure contemplation), were it not that man, however strong he may think himself, depends every moment very much upon the state of his bodily health, and even upon that of his imagination. I do not, however, assume that I am strong, but rather unconditionally require of myself to be so. I should then (if I feel as I do now) see death approach without any dread, and my only desire would be to maintain my consciousness, and thus to follow step by step, as far as possible, the transition to another state. Hence I should not for myself consider a lingering death as a misfortune, although a more rapid one might be preferable in some respects both to the dying and to the survivors. For a number of years, since an event happened to me in Rome which struck me very much, I have maintained the belief, or, if this is saying too much, the presentiment, that I shall not die until some significant appearance has announced it to me. Whether

this will be so I must wait to see; but I, like you, should wish the event to be pre-signified.

You say that for years you had foreseen that Ewald would die before you. Were you merely influenced by the state of his health, or had you any other indication?

I found, when I referred to them again, that I was well acquainted with the passages in the Bible you mention in your letter. They are certainly consoling, as confirming hope, awakening trust, and encouraging confidence in the love which put them forth. But I think that this view agrees very well with that which I had expressed in my letter; for whether these passages refer to the present life or to another, they all point out a far distant future. But in the meantime the feeling of misfortune and sorrow continues,—and in this interval, irrespective of the prospect of a future change of fortune, the views brought forward by me, which you call philosophical, may have great influence. But it is not quite just to call these views merely and exclusively philosophical. It is a part of a religious frame of mind to view the destiny of man as a connected plan ordained by the highest wisdom, into which this very wisdom has admitted human suffering, even when undeserved; and, whether we regard this from a philosophical or a religious point of view, yet as this plan, viewed in either light, must awaken and command the deepest reverence, it is assuredly a consoling and elevating thought in the midst of grief and misfortune, that, even with these sufferings, we form a part of this eternal plan. But if I were to declare my own inmost feeling, I must say that the passages mentioned by you are not those I should myself have chosen from which to derive consolation. They belong to the class of promises and hopes;—and this way of living in the future has never been my wish or aim. I have always endeavoured rather to work in the present, and thereby to obtain an inward victory over misfortune; and precisely in this respect the study of the Bible is an infinite and most certain source of conso-

lation;—I know nothing that can be compared with it. Scriptural consolation flows with equal strength, though in quite different ways, from the Old and New Testaments. In both the guidance of God and the universal government of Providence is the prominent idea, and thence arises in minds of a religious tone the deep, inward, indestructible conviction, that even the arrangements through which we suffer are appointed for the wisest ends, and are the most beneficial for the whole, and consequently even for the sufferer himself. In the New Testament there is such abundant predominance of the spiritual and moral views—everything is referred so exclusively to purity of mind, that whatever befalls a man, externally or internally, if he but struggle with earnestness and energy after this, everything else is thrown completely into the shade. Thus misfortune and every sorrow loses a portion of its oppressive influence, and at all events all its bitterness vanishes. The infinite benignity of the whole of the New Testament doctrine, which represents God throughout in his most compassionate aspect, and in which the self-sacrificing love of Christ for the human race is above all conspicuous, conjoined with the example of Christ himself, soothes, like a healing balsam, every sorrow of mind or body. In the Old Testament this certainly cannot be found. But even there, always more consoling than terrible, appear the power and wisdom of the Creator and Governor of all things, raising us above individual misfortune by the grandeur and sublimity of the conception.

I ask you, dear Charlotte, to write to me on the 21st, and I must this time request that it should not be much later, as I leave home early in December, and should consequently receive your letter later, as it would have to be forwarded to me.

Farewell.—With sentiments which I know you value, and which will never change, yours,
H.

LETTER LXV.

TEGEL, Dec. 6, 1826.

I have received and read with great interest, dear Charlotte, your important letter of the 19th, finished on the 21st of last month, and I thank you very sincerely for it. You say that my last letter arrived some days later than it should have done according to the date. The fault must have been in the irregular delivery. Forgive my being rather circumstantial here;—it is done once for all, and it is important to me that you should not be made uneasy by such a delay.

You remark in your letter, that before the coming of Christ intercourse took place between the Deity and some privileged individuals only, but that through Christianity every one admitted into its bosom can maintain a closer relation with the Highest Existence. I think this perfectly true. I cannot indeed say what might be the nature of that intimate and personal intercourse of the Patriarchs with God described in the Old Testament. The narratives of the earlier portions of the Scriptures, whatever may have been their origin, possess in every respect such a venerable sanctity that no room is left to doubt their truth, although we may suspend our judgment on whatever is peculiar in the mode of thought and representation, or figurative in the expression. For in such ancient traditions, which must have been handed down orally for centuries before they were recorded, it must be very difficult to separate the inward sense from the outward form in which it is clothed. But it is a certain, consoling, and in the highest degree salutary truth, that through Christianity all the blessings of religion have acquired a universal and benevolent influence,—that

all outward or inward privileges have ceased, and that every one without distinction may believe himself to stand as near to God as, through his own strength and humility, he may be able to approach him in spirit and in truth. In all things—in religion as well as in morals—it is the truly distinctive character of Christianity to remove the partition-wall which formerly divided nations as if they were races of a different species—to sweep away the presumptuous idea that one nation is privileged by God above others, and to bind together all men by the common tie of duty and love to their neighbours. Here the question is no longer of figurative representations and miracles. Here reigns that spiritual communion with God which is the only one of which man really stands in need, and in which he can always participate through faith and right conduct. I confess that I cannot enter into the idea that there is or can be a closer communion between God and his creatures than the universal one which is conformable to the plain teachings of Christianity, into which every one may enter through purity and holiness of mind. It would be a dangerous pride to believe ourselves participants of such an especial communion,—and moreover the human race does not require it. Piety and purity of heart, and the strict performance of duty,—or even the earnest struggle after these, since their perfect realization can never be attained,—these comprise everything that is necessary to man, individually or collectively, and all that is pleasing—so we must conceive of it—to the Supreme Being.

With sincere and unchangeable sympathy, yours,

H.

LETTER LXVI.

RUDOLSTADT, JAN. 2, 1827.

The new year has begun, and with my whole heart I wish you happiness, dear Charlotte, in the course of it. May you pass through it cheerfully, without care, and above all in uninterrupted health! I hope that the fulfilment of these wishes is not improbable. . . . Your comfort in other respects is in great measure secured to you by the calm, constant employment which your own mind and the feelings of your heart teach you how to enjoy; and whatever I can contribute in the course of the year, by our correspondence or otherwise, to your greater cheerfulness, I will do with the most sincere pleasure. My sentiments towards you are incapable of change, and you may with safety calculate upon their continuance. I request you to maintain yours towards me unaltered, as I shall never cease to value them very highly. Our acquaintance had so early an origin, and has been maintained and renewed in so singular a manner, that I shall always look upon it as one of the most remarkable and agreeable events of my life. No one can allow greater claims to the past, or honour more highly the memory of it, or more delight to return in thought to the days of youth, than I do.

* * * *

A year appears so small a portion of life!—and so it is in a certain respect, for days, weeks, and months vanish with such incredible rapidity! But again, it is so important a section!—since, after all, even the longest liver does not unite many of these portions in the course of his existence. A new year really begins with every day, as well as with the first of January, but it cannot be denied that in writing

a new date there is something to induce deliberate reflection and consideration. It is generally my practice to examine myself at certain intervals of time, and to make new resolutions; and I have often found that this plan has its use, even if the resolutions are not always fulfilled and do not remain in constant force. There are also more or less auspicious years; and this is shown, as I have often remarked in life, frequently by certain indications, even if they appear for the moment insignificant or transient, in the first days of the new year. You will perhaps think this somewhat superstitious, but it is not entirely or very decidedly so. The misfortunes which befall men are owing to themselves far more frequently than is thought. There is a secret and unmarked influence of man upon things, which cannot be laid to his charge, as it does not lie within his consciousness, but which yet proceeds from him. If the temper of mind be ungenial, dark, and cheerless, it invests external objects with a corresponding gloom;—if one does not meet the events of life with cheerfulness, or at least with calmness and equanimity, as if prosperity and misfortune were almost matters of indifference, existence not only appears by so much the more burdensome and oppressive, so that one feels it hard to bear, but we also encounter, according to my experience, more really adverse influences. I can well believe that this has no influence upon great events, but in matters of lesser moment, which must nevertheless be subdued by us, it appears to me to be undeniable.

* * * *

The place from which I write to you, dearest Charlotte, may be known to you by name, but you are probably not acquainted with it. It is so situated that few travellers visit it without especial motives, and through the half-mountainous country the approach to it is rough and difficult. I am here alone, without any of my family, and proceed again the day after to-morrow. The Princess-Dowager is a woman such as one seldom meets with. I have known

her ever since my marriage, which took place at the same time as hers. Immediately after that event I spent some weeks here with my wife with whom she was very intimate, so that the place is very dear to me from this association. The Princess was then very young, and remarkably amiable and beautiful. When I was in Rome with my wife, she was also there for some months with the Prince, and we saw a great deal of each other. She became a widow soon afterwards, and during the minority of the young Prince she fulfilled the duties of the Regency with great wisdom, and always with that kindness and benevolence by which rulers, particularly in small territories, make themselves personally honoured and beloved by their subjects. Since the Prince assumed the government, and the education of her other children was completed, she has lived alone. She labours and studies for herself, possesses much information, especially of that nature which cannot be acquired without a profound and comprehensive mind. Her letters are equally animated and thoughtful, and in conversation the same talents are displayed, and in even a more lively manner, with the greatest simplicity and modesty. She is scarcely known to any except the very few whom chance has brought into contact with her. She is very religious, but her religion is so beautifully blended with the deepest and most liberal philosophical reflection, that it thereby becomes still more peculiar. She suffers very much from her eyes, which unfortunately prevents her reading or writing much. Another rather singular circumstance is, that for some years she has not been able to drive out. She had the misfortune, by an extraordinary accident, to be overturned in front of her castle. No limb was broken, but the shock was so violent, and so serious a concussion occurred, that since that time, whenever she tries to mount a carriage, she becomes ill directly and falls into a fainting fit. She has in consequence quite given up using any means of conveyance, and only goes as far from her residence as she can walk. Probably the nerves

of the spine have suffered, and the concussion produced by the motion of a carriage throws them into a morbid state which affects the brain.

Rudolstadt is one of the very beautiful districts of Germany. I have seen it at all seasons, and it is even now, in the middle of winter, very beautiful, although somewhat stern and solemn, from the magnificent mountain ranges around it, covered with thick forests. The view from the Castle, which stands upon a remarkable high mountain, is exquisite. The Prince has another castle about three miles distant, the old mansion of the Schwarzburg family. This has a still more singular position in the midst of forests. It stands upon a moderate elevation, and has spread out before it a beautiful meadow full of wild deer, and a rushing mountain-stream, the Schwarze, and it is surrounded at a little distance by high mountains, clothed chiefly with fir-trees. I was there once, many years since, for a week in the summer with the Princess and her family, and I thought it remarkably beautiful. When the noble lady wishes to visit this Castle now, she goes on foot, and the journey occupies two or three days.

I shall not receive your valued letter for some days, for which I am very sorry, as I always like to have one from you beside me when I am writing. But my journey has been delayed contrary to my wish. I now ask you to write so that your letter may arrive in Berlin on the 25th, or only a few days later.

Farewell, dearest Charlotte. With sincere and unchangeable sympathy, yours,
H.

LETTER LXVII.

BERLIN, Jan. 28, 1827.

I have received both your letters, dearest friend, although the first, of 20th December in last year, was very late, as the plan of my journey was not carried out, and I did not go to Hadmarsleben. It has been sent to me here. Now I shall remain here and at Tegel until the middle of summer, and our correspondence will be secure from such interruptions.

I am very glad to find that your health is at least tolerable, and that the changeableness of the weather and the frequent storms which generally injure susceptible constitutions, have not affected you. I certainly do not much like winter, and from childhood have not had any predilection for the so-called beauty of a winter-day. The cold is of no consequence to me, since I always so guard myself against it that it can do me no harm, and I can shut myself up in my room from the melancholy and monotonous view of the snow out of doors. In the town I generally feel more comfortable, as I cannot see anything of the desolation of winter from my window. In the night only is this season beautiful, when man and the ordinary tumult of the crowd cease to disturb, and the starry heavens give a view of pure Nature. During the day it is only in the country that the view out of the window is agreeable. I early acquired this habit of enjoying only the night when in town. When quite a young man, while living in the city, I have sat for whole days in my room when I was not in company, but regularly traversed the lonely streets for several hours of the night. I am exceedingly glad therefore that you have the same predilection as myself for the starry sky. One

who is not susceptible of this inward sentiment loses a very great joy, and one at the same time of the purest and most elevated nature. This high enjoyment is very appropriate to your disposition and your retired life. I have again dwelt with great interest upon the survey of your employments, which you are so good as to give me at the close of the old year and the commencement of the new one. But it has given me pain to see that, with very great and excessive effort, you have had less profit than in former years. Such observations grieve me exceedingly. However much I like industry and labour,—however highly I honour you, good, dearest Charlotte, for both, I would willingly think of you, in the evening of your life, after a burning noon, in a more quiet situation,—and therefore I cannot approve of your endeavouring to add to your present engagements. Believe me, dear Charlotte, I feel your delicacy and appreciate it fully;—but I beg of you to speak to me with confidence respecting your worldly position: you esteem me sufficiently to lay open to me that more exalted part of yourself, your mind and soul,—and this gives me great and sincere pleasure. You can in truth confide in no one who takes a greater interest in all your concerns.

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In a correspondence which is neither upon scientific subjects nor on business, we speak of ideas, sentiments, and feelings, and communicate openly what may be more or less approved by our correspondent. It is always to be understood that something of this is but our own opinion, which may be erroneous. But we cannot do otherwise than reason and write according to our own opinion, until it is corrected by a better one.

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Providence certainly does not favour individuals, but the deep wisdom of its counsels extends to the instruction and ennoblement of all.

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. . . . The permission of evil in the world, the impunity of the wicked, and the sufferings of the good, are problems in the government of the universe which man has always endeavoured to solve, now in this way, now in that.

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It has always appeared to me the safest course to rely, with all humility, on the unsearchable but sure wisdom of the divine counsels, and to rest satisfied with the natural reflection that in this life we survey so small a portion of human existence that we are not entitled to pass any judgment whatever on the whole.

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You remark very justly that a winter-day has its charms. The snow is certainly monotonous, but it is also pure, and presents an image of untouched spotlessness when it has newly fallen and is yet untrodden. In Switzerland that white covering to the high mountains, almost inaccessible to the foot of man, is very beautiful. Your comparison of it to a pall has struck me: the idea was new to me. But even if the snow were a pall, there would be nothing unpleasant in the allusion. Nature lies during winter as if in the torpidity of death; and if Nature, in her regularly appointed course, calls up the remembrance of death, it presents itself to the mind and the imagination only as a necessary transformation,—an unveiling of a new, and till now unsuspected condition.

I must again have expressed myself not quite clearly, if you, dear Charlotte, believe that I in any measure combatted the opinion that an all-ruling Providence guides the destinies even of individual men. According to my firm conviction, man may rely upon it with safety: it is contained in the idea of the Creator and Supporter of the world; it appears in many passages of both the Old and New Testaments, and it is not only a firm and well-founded, but also a deep and consoling truth, of which ~~no~~ doubt remains;—and you are certainly right when you say that the happy

require the belief that they may not be arrogant; those that are not happy, as a support; and the miserable, that they may not sink into despondency. Even if every one conceives in his own way of this divine consideration and care, these are merely unimportant diversities of individual opinion. The main point still remains, that an all-wise and all-good Being rules the order of things to which we belong; that our slightest or most important destinies are interwoven with it; that everything that comes to pass must be good and beneficial, although to us it may be grievous; and that His satisfaction in us, and, unless where from some equally wise reasons an exception occurs, the blessing or curse which befalls us depends upon the conformity of our actions with the law of duty, and yet more upon the purity of our intentions. So far our opinions could not differ. What I said merely referred to an observation in an earlier letter of yours, that the Deity appears to make a distinction between different individuals, and conducts many through a severer discipline. You had not even expressed this as your own opinion, but only as one of the attempted modes of interpretation of the phenomena you mentioned. I could never agree with the idea that the Deity cared more for some than for others. God may, and this lies in the nature of the thing, testify His approbation more towards those who, in consequence of their allegiance to Him, exhibit more love, sincerity, and purity of heart; but a partial distribution of his guiding, watchful, rewarding and chastening care, cannot be reconciled either with the idea of His omnipotence or with that of His justice. In the Old Testament, the expressions relating to the elect of God may seem to have this sense perhaps, but these passages are partly connected with the Jewish notion of the chosen people of God; and this idea of election does not certainly require that exclusive sense, but only means that the elect were those who, by their purity of heart and piety, were most worthy of the love of God, and had obtained His approbation. In the New Tes-

tament there are no passages from which partiality in the care of God and in the ruling dispensation of his Providence could be inferred. If in any passage this view appears to be held, it may be easily explained otherwise. But the consoling thought remains for ever, that God sends us even adverse and distressing fortune only through love, and in order to purify our hearts. So, dear Charlotte, I understand the point which has been under discussion in two of our letters, and I should think that this would fully harmonize with your views and convictions.

LETTER LXVIII.

TEGEL, March 18, 1827.

You already know my liking for an occasional visit to the country, so you will not wonder that I now write to you from Tegel. I am here for a couple of days only, and have not, properly speaking, left the town. Although the weather is inclement, it does not prevent my walking out every day,—that is to say, as long as I am here.

The lake which is on my estate is now again quite free from ice. This deliverance of the water from the fetters which in winter rob it of its beautiful motion, and make it like the firm land, is a spectacle in which I always rejoice very much. We sympathize with the restoration of free motion, and dislike the harsh inflexibility which, as far as its influence will extend, imposes its own peculiar nature on the most beautiful portion of the delicate gliding element. It is generally said that water divides countries and regions;—but it rather unites them: it presents a surface much more easily traversed than the solid land; and it is a beautiful thought, that however far one shore may be from another, the wave which now ripples over my foot will in a short time be on the opposite strand.

I read with pleasure in your letter that you are busy arranging a plan for a little journey to Offenbach, and I beg you not to give up your intention. I believe that you, dear Charlotte, occasionally require some recreation, or at least that it would have a very favourable effect upon you. I feel glad that you are not in any way dissatisfied with your situation, or wearied with your occupation. Yet if you were, it would be no more than human. When the same operation has been carried on for a long time, though

without aversion or even with pleasure, the very uniformity produces a kind of weariness, and new objects enjoyed for a short time give the thoughts and feelings a new impulse, which generally re-acts upon the body. I think your choice of Offenbach a very suitable one, as you have there a dearly valued and intimate friend; it is also a pleasant place, in a very pretty situation, and not far from you. I have often been there: for the first time in the year 1788, the same year in which I saw you at Pyrmont. I visited there the well-known authoress Madame de Laroche, whom I saw there again many years later, when returning from Paris with my wife and family. She was a clever woman, and very lively even in advanced age, and had something remarkably amiable and agreeable when she was seen in the midst of her children and grandchildren. A son, a little older than I am, lives in Berlin on terms of intimacy with me; he is happily married, and is in every respect an excellent man. I sincerely hope you may prosecute your intention.

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LETTER LXIX.

BERLIN, April 10, 1827.

I have duly received your letter, dear Charlotte, which, according to my wish, you sent off on the 3d, and heartily thank you for it. The cheerful contented tone which reigns in it from the first to the last line has caused me quite a peculiar joy. Since I take, as you know, so lively an interest in you and your welfare, it is natural that whatever enables me to discover your frame of mind should be to me most important. Though at present, through your talents, industry, and exertion, your situation is such that you need not fear any unusual disturbances, still there may remain much to wish for; and even in the most monotonous position things may happen, which, without illness or misfortune, may affect the spirits and induce sadness. But indeed the melancholy mood befalls most frequently the noblest natures, and there can be no objection whatever should one wish its departure, even for the sake of the happiness of those whom it attacks. It appears to me, however, that you have been for a long time much more equable in your spirits than at the beginning of our epistolary intercourse. It is very good and kind of you to ascribe it to the influence which you so readily concede to me. The merit is on your side; your soul is as clear and receptive as your disposition, and hence you are always open to every conviction and every truth. I like cheerfulness above all things;—not exactly the loud sort of it which vents itself in joyous merriment, but the calm cheerfulness which diffuses itself gently and completely over the inner soul. I like it both in others and in myself, especially on account of the greater clearness which the thoughts always take when we are cheerful, and which

to me is the chief and indispensable condition of a satisfying existence in life, both for one's self and in intercourse with others. Melancholy also sometimes brings clearness along with it, and often a greater clearness than cheerfulness. One sees and feels things in their nakedness when the soul is so deeply moved within itself that the veil which usually conceals them is torn away. But it is, as I might call it, a painful clearness which must be dearly bought; and it shows objects only at times and transiently, as one also sees for an instant into the depths of heaven when lightning rends the clouds. The light clearness of peaceful cheerfulness is immeasurably different. This shows things partly as if they passed without concerning us, and partly as if one possessed strength enough to keep himself from being too much affected by them. In both ways the greater number of events go by as in a play; and it is certainly the most dignified attitude of man to regard them without dwelling long beside them or becoming deeply absorbed in them:—being always mindful that there is another wholly different and more worthy spiritual province, in which man may feel himself really at home. If one looks in this way upon whatever is foreign to him, and regards more seriously only those things to which friendship and goodwill lend a reality which can in no sense be dealt with as the mere scenery of a drama—which no longer simply claim the fancy and the thought, but seize upon the heart with warm and living vitality, then perhaps he deals with life in the way the most proper of all. With a view to the preservation and permanence of your cheerfulness I am very glad, dearest Charlotte, that you occupy yourself with the plan of your little journey. This occupation will be itself a reward, even in the event of something coming in the way to prevent the execution of the project. I cannot imagine such a result, however, as the affair is so very simple.

What you mention in your last letter about Offenbach

has given me much pleasure. I did not know that the Isenburger palace was the former residence of Madame de Laroche. It is quite natural in you to take a lively interest in everything connected with your existence and lodgement in the house, to busy yourself with all the details, since the writings of Laroche, as you say, not only imparted to you in your youth great pleasure, but considerably influenced your mental culture. With persons of fine disposition in such a case a grateful attachment is preserved. By the way, the garden of which you speak is the only thing which I distinctly remember. It was there that I saw Madame de Laroche for the last time, as I was returning from Paris in the year 1801 with my wife and family. There was an arbour in the garden, in which we sat. You remind me of what Goethe in his biography, "Truth and Poetry," says of the family Laroche, with whom he passed some days on his return from Wetzlar on his way to Frankfort, and was received in a friendly manner. You are, it seems, not quite satisfied with Goethe and the way in which he represents the worthy lady and the other members of the family.

Farewell for to-day, and write me on the 24th. With the heartiest and ever unalterable sympathy, yours,

H.

LETTER LXX.

BERLIN, May 2, 1827.

A thousand thanks, dear Charlotte, for your much wished-for letter of the 24th. I always like very much, when I write a letter, to have one before me to answer. If our correspondence seldom contains anything to which a reply is indispensable, a correspondence is, in the very nature of it, still an answer, and one writes less willingly when the thread is for a moment broken and must be tied anew. Owing to your kind attention, this never happens to me; on the contrary, our letters regularly alternate. I am convinced that if many men knew that we write to each other so punctually without having topics of science or business, yet communicating to each other matters of fact, they would not at all comprehend what one could possibly say when one has apparently nothing to say. Very few have a conception of, and a capacity for, the communication of thoughts, ideas, and sentiments, even when they may by no means be deficient in sense, spirit, and susceptibility for all feelings of which man is usually susceptible. What belongs yet more to the pleasure of such communications is the inclination we have to contemplate our own thoughts and feelings reproduced in another. In such intercourse as exists between us two, there is not even the wish to transplant something from the one into the other, to confirm, fortify, or destroy opinions; at least, for my part, I am conscious of no such tendency or endeavour. But what I feel distinctly is a great desire, arising from a love to fixed opinions, to compare what I think and feel as to subjects of inward consciousness, with the experiences of others and with their manner of presenting them. That which one con-

fronts with the idea and thought of others presents itself to one, in some sense, with more certainty; and were there no other reason for reciprocal communication among mankind, this would certainly be a sufficient one. In this matter, too, writing has in some respects an advantage over spoken language. It unites the advantages of the latter with those of solitary reflection, which are also unmistakeable. In all that relates to the communication of thoughts and experiences, one needs not to have another face to face as in a personal interview; and solitude infallibly aids the collection and the holding fast of one's own thoughts—nay, is necessary to the peaceable completion of the thread of one's thoughts, before another steps in between them.

I was much delighted to see that you were glad to receive my letter during the holidays. It was my intention that you should do so, for I know that you allow yourself at those seasons that leisure, peace, and recreation, which you, good Charlotte, so often long for, and yet so seldom enjoy. I know also, that to you the feast of Pentecost is especially dear in its spiritual significance, and now see with pleasure that the season has passed with you in great cheerfulness, and that my letter and your answer have added to your contented, cheerful state of mind. I confess that your simple contentedness is to me always delightful,—often touching. It flows out of your inner being, from which the external life takes its shape. I entirely share your opinion that the appointment of fixed days of rest, even when they are not at all considered as religious festivals, is an idea most pleasant and truly enlivening to every one who cherishes a benevolent disposition towards all classes of society. There is nothing so selfish and heartless as the displeasure, or at least the kind of contemptuous aversion, with which distinction and wealth sometimes regard Sundays and holidays. Even the choice of the seventh day is certainly the wisest which could have been made. However it may seem to lie, and in one respect really may lie, within the power of the

will to shorten or lengthen the usual period of labour, still I am satisfied that the six days are the really true, fit, and adequate measure of time for work, whether as respects the physical strength of man or his perseverance in a uniform occupation. There is also something humane in the arrangement by which those animals which assist man in his work enjoy rest along with him. To lengthen beyond the proper measure the periods of returning repose, would be as inhuman as it would be foolish. An example of this occurred within my own experience. When I was in Paris during the time of the Revolution, it happened that, without regard to the divine institution, this appointment was made to give way to the dry, wretched decimal system. Every tenth day was directed to be observed as the Sunday, and all ordinary business went on for nine days in succession. When it became distinctly evident that this was far too much, many kept holiday on the Sunday also, as far as the police-laws allowed, and so arose on the other hand too much leisure. In this way one always oscillates between two extremes, so soon as one leaves the regular and ordained middle path.

If this is the case, even according to prudential and worldly considerations, how much more forcibly does the matter appear in its religious aspects! Through these, the idea as well as the enjoyment of the holidays is turned into a source of spiritual cheerfulness and true comfort. The great days of festival are besides associated with such remarkable historical events, that they derive therefrom an especial sanctity. It is certainly the most suitable celebration of these days to read in the Bible itself, in all the four Evangelists, the narrative of those events to which the festivals relate, in the way, as you write me, you have been accustomed to do for many years. In the Evangelists the harmony of the narrative is quite as remarkable as the manner in which the different accounts vary from one another. The harmony attests their truth and authenticity, and in it lies

also the stamp of the spirit in which all these direct witnesses write, who saw and who accompanied Christ himself. But this spirit which animated them all, although it was a spirit of unity, did not prevent the peculiar features and beauties of each individual narrator from appropriately revealing and unfolding themselves. If one is accustomed to read the four Evangelists often, it will certainly be difficult for him to mistake from which of them a passage is taken, if only it be one which contains something characteristic of the writer. It appears to me also, from your last letter, as I had before imagined from some previous ones, that you give the preference to the Gospel of John. This way of speaking, however, is not quite proper, as in these writings everything must be equally respected. But still it is natural that one narrator should address the heart and experience in a different way from another, and thus a difference of impression may arise, according to individual character. I entirely share your opinion on this point. There is certainly in John, if one may be allowed to say so, more spirituality than in the others.

You remind me, dearest Charlotte, that I still owe you an answer to a part of your last letter but one, or an earlier one, and you very kindly call it a correction of your opinions on important truths. Let me more justly state the matter to be the wish that we should be of the same opinion in this also, as we certainly are for the most part in other weighty matters. I perceive, and always with great joy, that your views are the result of a pure, deep reflection, which illumines with the light of a clear understanding the subjects on which it chooses to dwell. Under the peace, of which I spoke and to which you revert, I certainly understand that which is pointed out in both of the very well selected passages quoted by you, to be included, but only in the way in which I take these passages. I must connect them both together, since one alone does not, at least directly, express the idea which I

associated with it. First, peace, as it is said in Isaiah, is the work of righteousness: it is impossible without the strict fulfilment of duty; impossible to every one, since strictness in the discharge of our duties is of the greatest importance. This, however, I should call only an earthly, human peace. It must be the foundation, but it is not all. It is preached in the Prophets and in the earlier parts of the Old Testament; but the New Testament gives, for the first time, the completion. That alone is the peace which the world cannot give,—an expression not to be surpassed. This peace is quite distinct from the world, from outward happiness and from outward enjoyment; it springs from an unseen power: there must be a present conviction in the mind, that one must separate his whole inward being from the world, not aim at outward happiness, but seek only the high rest of the soul which finds its security in a life of meekness and inward obedience, as in a quiet unruffled haven. The mere discharge of duty is not enough; the subordination of the personal existence to the law, and still more to the scrutiny, of the Highest, All-ruling and All-seeing Love, must be so absolute, that the whole being may be merged in it. Only in this belief and disposition can one appropriate to himself the peace offered by Jesus. For it would be a completely mistaken construction of the beautiful scripture passage, were one able to believe that the heavenly peace descended to man of itself, and without any exertion on his part. True, it descends in this sense that it cannot be merited by works—it cannot be won by one's own activity, as the goods of this world. It is a free, heavenly gift, always flowing from grace. Still man cannot embrace it without that disposition; he cannot participate in heavenly so long as he seeks earthly happiness. If he possess, however, this disposition, then is he sure of that peace; for it is indeed a true word respecting the heavenly gift, that to those who have shall be given. The earthly must have drawn to itself the heavenly as much as its weak

strength may, if it is to become participant of it. In this way inward peace depends always on man himself: in order to his happiness rightly understood, man needs nothing but this peace, and in order to possess it, he needs nothing but himself.

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In what you say about happiness, you have, however, for once misunderstood me,—a thing that must sometimes occur, notwithstanding the frequent and strict harmony between us. What I think on the subject, nevertheless, is only applicable to myself. I find it for me comforting and sufficient. I like to depend on myself, and I rather want, than rest on hopes which may be disappointed.—With inmost sympathy, yours,
H.

LETTER LXXI.

TEGEL, May 23, 1827.

You have given me, dear Charlotte, great pleasure by your letter of the 12th, 13th, and 14th, for which I heartily thank you. I am delighted to learn that you are well and cheerful, and enjoy the beautiful, truly unusually beautiful spring. It is not without reason you wonder that I came hither later this year than the season seemed to allow. However, I usually leave the town in June. It is at present very beautiful here, and eight days ago it was yet more lovely. The lilac, which gives a great charm to the garden both for the sight and smell, and which is here in great quantity and beauty, was in bloom. I can do without it, however, as I cannot say that I attach much importance to individual flowers. The art of gardening has little or no interest for me. I seek the great trees, and prefer those of the free woods to cultivated plantations. In the country I find more pleasure in wandering about freely and at large amid agreeable scenes, than in busying myself with the qualities of plants and flowers. Here I can enjoy to the utmost this free rambling, and my pleasant acquaintance-ship with trees. My house is embowered among beautiful trees, old, yet still in full vigour and considerable quantity, while, if I wish to go farther, there is close behind my park a wood belonging to the king. Trees have about them something very fair and attractive even in this,—that to the fancy, since they cannot change their places, they are witnesses of every change that occurs on the spot; and as some reach an exceedingly great age, they resemble historical monuments, and, like ourselves, they have a life, growing and passing away,—not being inanimate and un-

varying like the fields and streams. One sees them pass through different stages, and at last step by step approaching death, which suggests still more the resemblance between them and us. In order, however, to preserve this impression open and fresh, it is necessary that one be, from childhood upwards, often and for some time in the country. Only in this way do thoughts and feelings become associated with the objects which surround us in nature. It is strange, however, that I have a love for those trees only which, as they have no edible fruit, may in some sense be called wild. The most I can say for fruit-trees is, that they have a charm for me when in bloom. There are some very large ones, it is true, whose growth is indeed picturesque. But they say nothing to me, although I cannot assign any farther reason for it. It may possibly consist in this, however, that one commonly finds fruit-trees near buildings, or that they always betray the art and culture of man, while the soul and the imagination call for free nature which man has in no respect moulded or altered. It is bad enough that trees which lay claim to great beauty are so often robbed of their free and stately growth by the hands and eternal lopping of man. It so happens, for example, to willows. They become, when allowed to grow free and unhindered, strong, high, and picturesquely beautiful trees. In my childhood there stood three such truly wonderful trees in Berlin, but they exist no longer. I see, however, that I have filled two entire pages with my opinions on trees. Did I not know how good you are, dear Charlotte, I should have been afraid of wearying you. But I believe that you willingly read what I write, and gladly follow my ideas, and trace them out in detail. It is very pleasant for me to feel myself so unconstrained with you, and to talk to you as I should to myself. But I have still something to say to-day,—and so you must this time accept a yet longer letter than usual.

Your last letter gave me particular joy, inasmuch as you

share my views about the value of written communication, such as we have in our correspondence. In this, too, you are right, that such an uninterrupted epistolary intercourse leads to a deep knowledge of character on both sides. If there are but few to whom such a correspondence would give pleasure, there are perhaps few women who could conduct it at all. There are qualities necessary for it which do not belong to every one,—above all, a certain capacity of purely inward life. I know women to whom no one can or will deny the possession of mind; they have much, and even erudite learning; in the province of the sciences there are but few things of which they have not some knowledge; they have read all that has been written in recent times, and are even acquainted with the writings and the authors of antiquity;—yet their conversation is fatiguing, and it is scarcely possible to read their letters. One naturally asks why,—and the answer is not easy. It is certain, however, that language is the chief obstacle; it is not given to all; in fact it is rather a natural gift than an acquired talent. You have well termed language the garb of the soul. This is a very happy designation, and has greatly pleased me. In power of language, dear Charlotte, you are superior to many; and if, as you tell me, you are not acquainted with the more recent literature, from want of time as well as of inclination, you are none the worse of it;—perhaps you have thus so much the better preserved your originality. I also am entirely ignorant of these books. It is, however, clear to me, that when you had more leisure you read only our best authors,—nay, have lived with them; and hence your character and modes of thought have been educated at the same time with your language and style. There is life, warmth, and fire in your language, which is thereby always simple and natural, and never turgid or far-fetched. I have often said something like this to you without being guilty of flattery. The fact is evident in each of your letters and in every part of your

biography. It did not at all surprise me that you so very early felt the desire, as you say, of beginning an "earnest" correspondence, which should not contain allusions to ordinary events, but thoughts, meditations, and the like. You have, as a child, embraced every such opportunity with a sort of passion, and have preserved, as things of importance, the little letters you received. Even at so early an age as twelve you were entrusted to write many letters about family matters,—for example, the reports to your kinsman, the domestic physician, regarding the health of the household. You remark generally, that of all occupations those prosecuted with the pen or the pencil were most agreeable to you, although you also possessed a rare natural skill in household matters;—natural assuredly, for you have never received or needed any instruction in these things, the sharp, discriminating glance of your eye having always been sufficient for your guidance. (This capacity, it is worthy of remark, has become of the greatest importance to you in the latter part of your life.) Whether such a talent has contributed to your happiness, or won you much applause, is another affair; but you have at least felt more pleasure in turning to your little writing-desk, and making extracts from the books with which you got acquainted by degrees.

It is not without purpose that I recall to you, dear Charlotte, these pictures of yourself, from a part of your biography. The early practice of composition may have contributed to give you an unusual lightness, readiness, skill, propriety, and happiness of expression: but not less needful are the intellectual powers which, as a basis, communicate to these other qualities their real worth.

Through all these ever-recurring remarks, a thought has more than once occurred to me, which I will now express. You will laugh, but I am in earnest about it. Listen then to me attentively, dear Charlotte. I know how, in that now long by-gone time, you were bowed down with the weight

of the unhappily irreparable loss of property which you then suffered. I do not forget how you then struggled with your hard fate, and when at length you were forced to take up some occupation, you chose that employment with which you thought you could best bring your inclinations into harmony. I do not forget how unweariedly you applied yourself with all diligence and thoughtfulness, and acquired such a rare skill that the products of your industry were thought to equal those of foreigners, and came to be much in demand. By your energy and perseverance you acquired an independent livelihood, which gave you liberty to follow a half-country life agreeably to your taste. It does you great honour, and awakens my full and true esteem. It is not alone the talent you displayed that I know how to respect, but still more those traits of character which were necessary to its successful employment.

Gladly would I see you, however, in a position of greater freedom, and in occupations which would permit you to live more like yourself, and with less exertion, as your years increase. Yes, dear Charlotte, I should very much wish to see you relieved from so laborious an occupation; and I know, at the same time, that what may do well enough for many other people, is not suitable for you.

You have very often alluded in your letters to the interesting relation in which, through every vicissitude of your life, from your childhood till his death, you stood to Ewald. You think with touching gratitude of the influence which he had over you, and of the constant sympathy which, by word and deed through a long life, he trustfully showed you. Did he never awaken in you the idea to avail yourself of your pen? How many women have done and do this, who are less qualified perhaps than you for it! Think only of Theresa Huber, whom you have more than once mentioned with love, who was known to you more closely through common friends. It was indeed necessity which drove her to writing, but at first she was certainly

less qualified for it than you. You may object here, perhaps, that Theresa Huber wrought by the side of her husband, and under his protection, assistance, and correction. If you embrace such a resolution on my advice, it is only reasonable that I should be helpful to you. Write your views, thoughts, and observations, on subjects which you choose yourself. Your own fortunes, and much which stands nearly related to you, would certainly afford you matter enough; still more, your rich, internal life, which even in the very simple and laborious mode of existence which you practise, would never be exhausted. You succeed most admirably in the description of the inward states of the soul.

Reflect on my proposal; try your intellectual strength; be not too modest, and tell me your mind with the confidence which you always so kindly show me, and to which my sympathy in all that concerns you gives me so just a claim.

And now farewell, dear Charlotte. I am myself alarmed at the length of my letter, but you find in this a proof of the sincere sympathy with which I listen, and always will listen to you. Yours, H.

LETTER LXXII.

TEGEL, June 12, 1827.

Your dear letter, posted on the 5th, has, like all your letters, given me, dear Charlotte, much joy, and I thank you heartily for it.

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I do not know whether you have so many storms in your neighbourhood as we have here. There was one here lately which lasted throughout the whole night, and I do not remember ever to have heard thunder so grand and varied in character. Peals of all kinds—some distant and prolonged, and then increasing in loudness and rapidity, followed each other, bursting the heavens with their tumult. I sat, as I usually do, till one o'clock, busy at my writing-desk, but went to bed during the storm, and fell asleep while it was yet raging. Of all the appearances of nature I like storms the most. Although they certainly often cause great damage and painful loss, yet, through the coolness and rains which they bring, they are in the highest degree beneficial. Here in Tegel they rarely occur with great force, because the extensive lake, as people say, breaks up the thunder-clouds. If, however, they pass across the lake, then is it a sign that they are large enough to support the withdrawal of electricity which the mass of water effects, and in this case the storms usually last for some considerable time.

You say in your letter that you lost in the last severe winter some acacias which you had got planted as a shade to your garden-chamber from the sun, and regret the loss of such fine full-grown trees. I believe it, and understand it thoroughly. It is not merely annoying to lose trees, but

it may even be painful if it be a favourite tree which one has become accustomed to. I have not lost any trees by frost, but the storm has up-rooted one of my acacias, and split a maple. Nowhere have I seen a larger acacia. It had a very thick trunk and wide-spread branches. The acacia, however, seldom remains sound below the earth after it reaches, as this one had certainly done, the age of forty-five or fifty years. This tree also had been once struck, but I had again given it firmness by a strong stay which I applied to it; but the storm bent it slowly, and at the same time tore its roots out of the ground. The maple was still larger and finer, but, alas! it was so much shattered, that I have been obliged to have the whole tree dug up. There is now a gap which one, not knowing the reason, might consider intentional, as it allows from the house a pretty peep of the lake,—which, however, pains me as often as I glance at it. Trees are certainly unfortunate in this respect, that they must stand still though exposed to wind and weather, to all the nuisance of birds and insects, not to speak of the injuries inflicted by man, without being able to shake themselves free of one indignity. Animals can seek shelter;—and yet we can scarcely prevent ourselves from regarding trees as sensitive beings. They are certainly alive;—their bending seems often like a complaint that they must stand so immovably. The storm is besides the most joyless,—one may say, the most fearful aspect of Nature. The manifestation of so much unseen power, and the fact that one cannot at all comprehend how it suddenly rises and quickly shifts, make it much more terrible than the other appearances of nature which fall more within our ken. In storms I always think with great sympathy how you suffer from them, since your garden-house, as you say, secures you so little.

You must again permit yourself to be pleased with me for letting myself expatiate on my passion for trees; but you are so good, and you say so very kindly that your own

appreciation of my favourites of free nature has been greatly increased, and that you view with more love than before the leafy inhabitants of your little plot! These are expressions so beautiful and womanly, that I have read them with great pleasure, and thank you, dear, good Charlotte, right heartily for them.

* * * *

You allude in your letter to my intended journey to Silesia this summer, and say that this is less pleasant to you, because it seems such a great distance off. But I go, I am sorry to say, still further this summer, although I shall not touch Silesia. I mean to accompany my wife to the baths at Gastein. This spa lies behind Salzburg, and is therefore about a hundred and twenty miles from here. We leave, however, in July at the earliest, and I shall tell you in my next letter, which I shall write before my departure, to what address I shall beg you to direct your letters to me. I shall take this opportunity, too, of visiting Munich, where I have not been for many years. We shall be absent till September, as the journey backwards and forwards takes up a long time, and our stay at Munich has to be added to it. Gastein is one of the most interesting spots in Germany. I have not, indeed, yet seen it myself, as in former years my wife was there without me; but I know Salzburg; and there begins the range of mountains of which the valley in which Gastein lies is in some sense the last and most remote. This place is but little visited from the North of Germany; but a great many come to it from Austria and Bavaria, and even from Italy. Notwithstanding the concourse of visitors, the arrangements for their accommodation are very bad, and they seem to think very slowly of improving them. As I like Tegel very much, I leave it always unwillingly; yet this feeling gives way as soon as I am seated in the coach, and in many respects I enjoy these months. I have not for a very long time seen any high mountains, nor indeed any truly great or

noble views of nature, and I always place myself willingly in their neighbourhood. The waters of Gastein are besides among the most effective which are known. These journeys to the baths, however, are owing as much to fashion as to a regard for health. In my childhood and early youth it was very rare that any one, even when suffering severely, undertook a journey in order to restore his health by a bath. Men are now grown fonder of moving about, and find great pleasure in travelling here and there; and, although everything is now dearer, they can more readily procure the means, and so arises every summer a real emigration to the baths. Still, I suppose, it is more the fashion here than elsewhere; more, for example, than with you and your neighbourhood.

* * * *

I am very sorry that the great heat of this year, which is by many, and by myself among the number, so much wished-for and enjoyed, has so unfavourable an effect on you, and, what is worst of all, awakens in you so much anxiety. I shall rejoice if your next letter brings me better news.

It seems to me very remarkable that you remember so long a series of summers in which there was little warmth. It is true, as you remark, that I was then absent, and living in southern climates. I am apt, however, to forget easily what has occurred in the times in which I have myself lived. I am much better acquainted with earlier history. Partly I do not attend to what is passing, partly I place it in the times to which it does not belong. There remains with me that only which has struck me somewhat deeply in spirit or in feeling. But events—things in course of taking place—escape me easily. This summer, however, everything is remarkably early. Roses are already over,—the lilies will soon be so. For lilies I have a particular partiality; their colour, growth, smell—all is exceedingly delightful, and besides that, they have a

splendour which belongs to no other flower. In Italy and Spain one sees flowers growing wild, which with us are to be seen only in gardens. But the lily is very rare. On the island of Ischia near Naples, there is a species of lily very aromatic in odour, but the colour is not so radiantly white, and inclines rather to grey. They grow only in one part of the island, and, curiously enough, though elsewhere the lily requires a good soil, it is in the hardest of sands at the edge of the sea. The inhabitants relate that it is a sort of miracle; that they are indebted for it to the saintly Rosalia, the sacred guardian of the island. It is on the very spot where she suffered martyrdom that these lilies now grow.

You say that you have received a kind letter from the daughter of Becher, the Director of the Rhenish West-India Company. The father of the lady is a very pleasant, interesting man, who inspires one, as soon as he appears, with confidence in his insight, activity, skill, and aptitude for business. Some of his children were born in England. He made a long stay there, partly in London, partly in Manchester, and had formed extensive projects in manufactures, but was obliged to abandon them at the time of the war with France, and then, for the first time, he returned to Germany. Despite his very long stay in England, he was not very happy there. It must be owing to something in the manner of life, the scenery, and the impression made by the national features and language, that there are so few men who choose to pass their days in a foreign land. Single exceptions one certainly finds, even among the Italians, some of whom prefer to live in Petersburg; but these are always rare. Even those who are prevented by circumstances from returning to their fatherland, still retain a longing for it, and try many plans to be again restored to it.

You speak much, dear Charlotte, in your last letter, about storms, in answer to something which I had said in

one of my letters on that subject. I received your dear sheets just during a violent storm. That you should sometimes cherish a wish to die by a stroke of lightning is a thing I would be far from blaming; I find it, if one brings death closely present to one's mind, very natural, and should myself, without hesitation, share the feeling. It is a death so pure—not at all disfiguring—scarcely painful; and although we know that one always quits life by the ordination of Providence in whatever way it may happen, still it is not possible to banish the idea from the imagination—an idea present also, as you say, to your childish years—that such a death appears like one which comes immediately from Heaven. Among the elements there is no purer or more beautiful flame than that caused by the simple power of electricity in nature. This kind of death, too, occurs amid such a majestic scene, that its violence seems to disappear. No death produced by external circumstances comes so near to nature as this. It is indisputable, however, that those struck in a storm neither see the lightning nor hear the thunder: in a single second, life and consciousness must be gone.—It is surely strange that persons who are afraid of storms are usually most alarmed by the thunder; whereas, when the thunder is heard, all danger is past. Whatever one may say on this point, however, matters nothing. It arises certainly from this, that thunder, through its frightful peals and slowly accumulating roll, shakes the nerves, and thereby prevents or at least weakens all quiet and intelligent reflection. The fear caused by storms may not, however, always be merely fright and anxious care for the threatening danger, but oftener a certain influence of the thunder and lightning on excitable nerves. But it is not so easy a question to answer, whether it be preferable to be called suddenly away from the scene, or to die slowly in the consciousness that one is dying. I assume, of course, that the slow death is also a painless one. Even theologically the question has been raised. The reason why one might wish a slow

death is certainly no other than that one may have time to prepare himself for the event, and so not die impenitent. I set small store by this reason, I confess, and am certain, even without your explanation, that we are of the same opinion. The preparation for death must occupy the whole of life; for life itself, even from its first step, is an approach towards death. But though I cannot yield to this reason, yet there is much to be said in behalf of a death which one foresees, and which is linked with consciousness, at least in respect of individual feelings. There is always something very shocking in the idea of being suddenly called away, even when it is by a simple stroke of apoplexy. Then there is something human in the wish not to withdraw one's self from the feeling of death, to grow acquainted with it, and to observe the ebbing of life, even till the last breath.

Farewell, dearest Charlotte, and take means to protect yourself from the heat which has so unfavourable an influence on you. Your plan of always relieving yourself by blood-letting disquiets me. You can thereby only become weaker.—Yours,

H.

LETTER LXXIII.

LANDSHUT, July 19, 1827.

I have arrived here early enough to be able to write you, dear Charlotte, from this place, and am very glad of it. I hope to reach Munich the day after to-morrow, if I encounter no unusual hindrance on the way, and expect to find there a letter from you; for I know assuredly that you have sent off the letter on the day on which I begged you to do so. . . . I engage unwillingly in travel at present, and never without weighty reasons. I do not at all fear the inconveniences, but I do not like the preparations, though I dispose of these very simply. But travelling would not be so disagreeable to me were it not that it disturbs my business. One cannot prevent travelling from becoming a sort of idleness, or at best a species of busy indolence. I take as much precaution as possible against this, it is true, and if I cannot carry on the same occupations as usual, I try at least to make it only a change, not a cessation of labour. Work, according to my feeling, is as necessary as eating and sleeping. Even those who do nothing which a reasonable man would call labour, imagine themselves to be doing something, and there is no one who would willingly be thought quite an idler in the world. But there is a different sort of occupation which may be enjoyed while on a journey, namely, quiet thought,—without moving even a finger—without reading or writing. This is an enjoyment which one can certainly have at home; but we are so pedantic, that even irregular activity does not permit us to enjoy it unless perhaps during a solitary walk. I attach much importance to this, and therefore even willingly endure sleepless nights, only that I have these seldom,

except when in sickness; for in health I sleep well and soundly. In travelling, however, it becomes necessary, and thus I have the pleasure, while the will is justified. If a person travels, as I do at present, with one to whom he likes to speak, as I with my wife, when the conversation does not flag, and when one is stirred up more effectually than when alone, then the case is different. But I was speaking at first of solitary travel. It is certainly true, however, that men do not allow themselves sufficient time for leisurely reflection. They will do anything rather than think, even when quite disengaged, or, if they have no calling to some higher occupation, they will prefer to do nothing. The occupations of men are unfortunately such as exclude simultaneous reflection, while yet they do not themselves afford the mind any worthy exercise. To these occupations, however, there are many who have the silliness to attach a value, and even to be somewhat vain about them. This is plainly one of the reasons why women are in general more interesting than men; for in the occupations of women the calm tranquillity of the soul is less disturbed by the outward activity. Both move forward in harmony together, and the value of thought and feeling is more deeply felt. A woman, in other respects qualified, yields herself to both with more devotion.

The country between this and Berlin is not of remarkable beauty. Single spots here and there are fine. The region of the really lofty mountains begins between Munich and Salzburg, and extends as far as Gastein. I have been several times in Munich and Salzburg, but have never made a long stay in either of these towns. The road as far as this, and on to Munich, runs indeed through provinces exceedingly rich in the various beauties of nature; but they do not lie on the way,—partly by chance, and partly because a more level route has been chosen. Baireuth is a particularly pretty country, and is indeed the most attractive district between this place and Berlin. It has peculiarities not easily found in any other country. Great heaps of the bones of large

animals, and even entire parts of skeletons, are to be met with in huge wide subteranean caves. You will doubtless remember having read about them. There was much talk of them even in the newspapers for a while. The collection was partly of bones of well-known animals, which are not, however, now found alive in that neighbourhood, and partly of animals whose species appear to be extinct, as there is nothing now known of them in any country. There are also many petrified plants and animals of every sort found in the mountains of Baireuth,—more indeed in them than in most other mountain-ranges. It is very difficult to explain why no human petrifications have ever yet been found, not simply here, but in no part of the world. The bones of men are as liable to petrification as those of animals; and in the order of creation there is no considerable interval between the peopling of the globe with irrational animals and with man. One might otherwise believe that the epoch in which animal substances passed into stone went before the period when men spread themselves over the earth.

The next stage from here, on the other side of Baireuth, is a surprisingly attractive and wonderful place,—a small market-town, named Berneck, surrounded on all sides by mountains covered with fir, which enclose a very narrow circular valley. The mountains jut out much, and over the church-spire there hang many quite bare, pointed crags. On one of these mountains rises a high square tower, which stands out quite conspicuously. It is not applied to any particular use, but it is nevertheless preserved with praiseworthy care as a relic of antiquity. I know, dear Charlotte, that you accompany me with your thoughts, and willingly learn through what country I go, and where I stop. You know and share also my love for the beauties of nature, and are aware that I often pass some time at spots which may appear to many not worth a single glance. Were it otherwise, I should have asked your pardon,—and all the more as you have told me that you do not in general care much

about descriptions of travel, and would rather receive from me letters which lead you into the recesses of my thoughts. I am very grateful to you on both accounts, and it is to me a most pleasant idea that you look on my descriptions as paintings, especially because they are from me. It is always pleasant to become an object of attention even to a stranger;—how much more agreeable must it be to me to be accompanied in thought by you!

Farewell.—With unalterable sympathy, yours, H.

LETTER LXXIV.

BATH OF GASTEIN, August 5, 1827.

I wrote you, dear Charlotte, on the way I think from Regensburg on the 19th, and hope that the letter will reach you, though it may be somewhat late, from the slowness of the post. . . . This place lies very near the highest mountains of Germany. One of them is 2000 feet above the level of the sea. The vale is singularly sweet and beautiful. From Salzburg there is a good road; but the valley is very narrow. We may thank the course of the river for this valley, in which it has its bed. The greater part of the way from Salzburg is by the Salza; but some miles from here it follows the Ache, which falls into the Salza. The road can very rarely however take the level of the valley; for the most part it hangs along the rocks, and runs below only when it crosses by means of a bridge to the other side of the river. Among the rocks it is supported by high walls, but below only with wooden shafts. This road goes, however, only as far as the bath. Here a chain of mountains stretches away in an oblique direction. From this point the road is practicable only in small rude vehicles for perhaps an hour's journey; beasts of burden or horses must afterwards be used to cross the mountains. The view looking up the valley is beautiful. Several steps of the mountains are seen rising one above another, the lower of which are grown over with gloomy firs, and the uppermost covered with snow. At this mountain are situated the house in which we and other visitors at the bath are living, and a castle built by the last Archbishop of Salzburg, which is neither fine nor large. Over this range, which closes the valley, the Ache runs, and forms a waterfall, which in its

whole length would be very stupendous, but is broken into several separate leaps. The entire height is 630 feet. The river is hemmed in on both sides by steep rocks, above which at some places the spray is seen to rise from a great distance. The situation of the castle is remarkable and interesting, as it approaches so closely to the rocks and the mountain adjacent. The farther side which lies towards Gastein has a lofty flight of steps which lead from the court to the lower flat. Stairs and narrow paths with rails lead up the mountain and to the waterfall, which is scarcely twenty steps from the house, and makes a loud noise, of which the visitors at the bath, from the moment of their arrival till their departure, do not get rid for a second. This din is very annoying to many, especially to those of weak nerves, who take long walks to escape for an instant from it, cannot sleep, and make a great ado about it. For myself I rather like it. I occupy the chamber which is nearest to it, and work and sleep exceedingly well. The chief inconvenience is, that when one has visitors, it is necessary to speak louder than is agreeable, in order to make one's self understood. The narrow paths among the rocks behind the castle lead up to a bridge crossing the waterfall at its highest point. People have given it the very inappropriate name of the "Bridge of Terror." It affords a sweet and attractive prospect, with nothing in the least alarming. If one crosses this bridge and ascends for a short way at the side of the rushing Ache, he reaches a valley much opener than the lower one, which is enclosed by higher mountains. In my opinion, however, it is not at all so picturesque as this one, but it is possible to walk a long way in it without climbing; for which reason I choose it for walks in which I purpose to be occupied with myself rather than with the scenery. In the vale in which the bath is situated, which lies on the other side of the castle, there are some fine walks of every sort, but no place where one can go two hundred steps without being forced to climb or to

descend. For those who have delicate feet this is inconvenient, as they cannot go far in any one direction. Exercise, however, is by no means regarded as indispensable to a cure. One rather goes to bed for an hour or two after the bath, and it is considered advantageous if sleep follow. For the first few days before getting accustomed to the shaking and agitation, one does not succeed in sleeping; but at present I always sleep. I bathe at four o'clock in the morning; the usual length of time in the bath being an hour. The water at its source is very hot, being 40 degrees (90 of Fahrenheit); but it is allowed to flow early into the bath that it may cool; 27 or 28 degrees (about 62 Fahr.) is the average temperature at which it is used. The water is drunk also, but the bath is the principal thing. Some are not even allowed to drink it.

The vale would be robbed of its greatest beauty if deprived of the waterfall. I can stand by it for hours together, and admire the dashing, boiling, and spouting which lash the water into froth and spray. At the few steep parts it rushes forward in long green arches, whose edges are whitened with foam, and everywhere there is a haste and activity, as if it were a matter of life and death to reach the quiet and peaceful valley. I have seen in Switzerland and Italy much greater and more beautiful waterfalls. This one belongs to those of a smaller order. But its length and variety, now a perpendicular steep, then more or less of a sloping surface, communicate to it a charm which the others do not possess. I have been very particular in my description, as I know that it will interest you on its own account, and still more as I am well assured that you gladly accompany me with your thoughts, and therefore willingly receive a picture of a place which, so far as I know, has been little noticed. You see at the same time how pleasantly the time passes with me, as you know how much I enjoy a beautiful district.

On my way hither I visited Munich, and remained there

four days. There are many choice works of art to be seen at Munich. The king has bought a great number of ancient statues and paintings, and buildings of regal splendour are being erected in order to preserve them. The climate of Munich is, as you say, by no means pleasant. In summer, it is true, one does not equally remark this; but as the town lies very high, it has not only very severe winters, but is exposed to bitterly sharp and cutting winds. The springs and autumns are especially complained of. The immediate neighbourhood, too, is far from beautiful. The English garden affords the only pleasant walk, and it is certainly a fine spot.

I beg you to post your next letter to me on the 28th of August, and address it to Berlin as usual. Farewell.—
With heartfelt friendship and sympathy, yours, H.

[*Note.*—The district of Salzburg or Salzach in Upper Austria is an Alpine country, like Switzerland and the Tyrol, and is covered by the Noric Alps, the chief summits of which exceed 12,000 feet in height. This district, although little known or frequented, is full of natural attractions. “The principal valley,” says Hassel, “one of the most lovely that has been formed by nature and adorned by the industry and magnificence of man is enclosed by lofty mountains, the continuation of the central Alpine chain, which passing through Tyrol to the eastern frontier of Salzburg, forms an uninterrupted chain of glaciers, here called Kees, presenting all the varieties of Swiss scenery, defiles, avalanches, cascades, lakes, &c.” The cascade of the Krimonler Ache is the most striking in Austria; the torrent falls in five breaks from a height of above 2000 feet, forming at last a magnificent arch.]

LETTER LXXV.

BATH OF GASTEIN, August 21, 1827.

I received some days ago, dear Charlotte, your letter of the 5th, and am glad that you received the one which I posted at Regensburg. I hope that you have since got that also which I wrote from this place. You were kind in sending off your last letter earlier than I had directed. In this attention I recognise with great pleasure your anxiety to inform me early of what you know always very much interests me.

Although everything in your letter pleased me, yet I read with special interest what you say about a French family whom you have known for years, and who have just returned to Germany. The young and lately-married wife, whom you evidently regard with particular affection, has most of all attracted my attention. After all that you say of her, even though your love may have influenced your judgment, she must certainly be a woman of great amiability. I shall gladly receive any additional news of her and the family which you may be so good as communicate. I always like, as you know, to get acquainted with mankind through individuals: each new figure, whether it is personally known to us, or lives only in the fancy from description, sensibly enriches the mind. I suppose that I am right in imagining from your account that this is an emigrant family driven by the Revolution to seek a refuge from the dangers which threatened them at home, and who only wait in Germany for a favourable change of affairs in order to return into France. The influence of German manners, education, and society, cannot be wholly lost on the children of such emigrants as pass here some of those years of life

in which the mind opens and develops itself. In youth, the mind does not resist every foreign influence as it does at a later period. Its susceptibility anticipates the contrasts of things, rather than waits till they occur. It is certainly true, however, that the residence of French emigrants in Germany has, through the influence of one circumstance, been rendered almost as fruitless as if they had never set foot in our country. The same influence has also operated on the children of many families, although others have unquestionably availed themselves of the benefits of a German education. I know even cases in which some who left home when young have so linked and associated themselves to everything German, that they have finally taken up their residence among us, and speak their own language with less fluency than before. These cases, however, are rather the exceptions. The circumstance which has operated with these people is their familiarity with our language, and with the later specimens of our literature. What you say on this topic in your last letter but one is exceedingly just. The language certainly constitutes the true home. We long to be where its tones are heard, and nothing makes us so soon forget our country as the ability to express ourselves in the dialect of those among whom we may be residing. The influences of climate act in some cases very powerfully. The home-sickness of the Swiss is to be traced to these, at least in part, for all the natives of mountainous countries have the same feeling of pain when away from their homes. He who is accustomed to the pure invigorating air of the mountains cannot easily accommodate himself to the valleys, and the plains weigh on his spirits by their damp, heavy atmosphere. But the power of impressions received through the ear is remarkable, even when language has nothing to do with it. These have in every sense a more penetrating sharpness than impressions made through the eye. It is well known that nothing so affectingly awakens the home-sickness of the Swiss as the very singular combination of

tones, quite peculiar to themselves, which they call the "Kuhreihen" (*Ranz-des-vaches*), and which are not accompanied by words, nor arranged on any principle of melody or music. But to return to the French emigrants. I believe that the influence of German manners and language has been on the whole greater with respect to the men than to the women. The boys and young men not only enjoyed more intercourse with the educated classes, but efficiently availed themselves of the German Schools and Universities, which introduced them to a full acquaintance with the language. The girls, on the contrary, chiefly confined to the society of their parents, who retained all their national peculiarities in full vigour, learned our dialect in an artificial way, through the aid of schoolmasters, or in the company of servants. In neither of these ways was it possible for them to extract out of our modes of thought and sentiment what would have been really beneficial for them. For I hold it to be beneficial to blend our peculiarities with those of any of the civilized nations of Europe. It breaks off our one-sidedness; and where this takes place in the right way, we do not lose what is proper to us, but the sharp corners of character are smoothed away, while we retain more firmly the really valuable and noble qualities of it.

We shall probably leave this the day after to-morrow the 23d, by the most direct route to Tegel. The journey occupies ten or twelve days, so I expect to arrive on the 2d or 3d of September. We may, however, be detained here for a day or two longer, which one the less grudges as the spot is so beautiful. I have already begged you, dear Charlotte, to write me on the 28th of August to Berlin as usual. Your letter will thus either arrive along with me, or shortly before.—Farewell. With friendly interest, yours,

H.

LETTER LXXVI.

TEGEL, Sept. 5, 1827.

I returned here, dear Charlotte, on the 3d, and found waiting for me, as I expected, your kind letter of the 25th and 28th August, for which I heartily thank you. I attach much importance to regularity; and even letters such as yours, which I always receive and read with joy, are doubly acceptable when they come exactly at the time expected. I do not overlook your punctuality in writing, and know how to value it. You will certainly have got my letter of the 21st August by the time these lines arrive. My former letter, as I see from yours, was twelve days on the way, and you must therefore have received the other this morning. I left on the day I intended, and have been also able to occupy every day on the journey in the manner previously determined. The road is long, however, and if you wish to stop a night in every large town you must often make short journeys. I stayed a day in Baireuth, but nowhere else, arrived at Berlin on the evening of the 2d, and found myself here on the 3d. I remain in this place till the end of October, and even longer if the weather should be good, before I go to town. It was very kind in you to think of my journey during the late disagreeable weather. It was indeed most unpleasant from the morning of the 25th of last month, the day I left, till the 30th, when I reached the plains of Leipsic. The rain did not fall long at one time, nor continually, nor yet violently; but it showered more or less every day, the sky was perpetually clouded, and there was hardly a glimpse of sunshine during the whole course of our journey. Yet I had happily a tolerable day in Salzburg, which was very fortunate; for it

would be difficult to find a more lovely position and neighbourhood. A large fruitful plain stretches around, from which are seen mountains of all sizes, distributed in beautiful masses both at hand and in the distance. Single small mountains, which anywhere else would be called great, but which appear like hills when contrasted with their loftier neighbours, approach the town, and even form a part of it. The citadel rises on one of them, a Capuchin convent on another, and a third is simply covered with beautiful gardens. This last one is in the outskirts of the city, and a passage has been cut through it by the Archbishop at considerable expense, in order, it is said, to afford his valet a nearer way to a garden he had presented him with. There is nothing remarkably fine after Salzburg as far as Baireuth. But Baireuth itself has a sweet and attractive situation, although it cannot be compared with that of Salzburg.

You appear to have a great respect for the waterfall of Gastein, and wonder why a man of a mild disposition like myself should have had so great a liking for a scene of that sort. There certainly seems to be in this a certain contradiction, but, more closely considered, the inconsistency disappears. For he who carries about with him a fearless calmness of temper, sees all surrounding nature through the medium of his own feelings, and what is frightful and terrifying to others is to him only something great, solemn, and sublime. On the other hand, those of a gloomy, reserved, austere nature, demand of friendship and kindness to assume a merely silent form; for, if they have no mind to change their humour, they do not wish that these should approach them in a way to some extent hostile to their cherished feelings.

All that you say, dear Charlotte, of your opinions and feelings respecting me, gives me the greatest pleasure. The deep and sincere respect, the rare and tender truth which speaks in all your expressions, is highly agreeable, being a

delightful proof that you recognise in me, and make most account of, that which it has been my chief effort to realize and preserve in myself. I may even say, that the lively gratitude you manifest is a right and proper feeling; but you may also believe assuredly that it communicates to me a perpetual happiness to have resumed my correspondence with you. I did so with the intention of not again allowing it to drop.

With the most heartfelt sympathy, ever yours, H.

LETTER LXXVII.

TEGEL, Sept. 21, 1827.

I have duly received, dear Charlotte, your letters of the 4th and 15th, and heartily thank you for them. Both have given me peculiar joy, as they present your sentiments in the most pleasant and agreeable form. The first letter also, coming as it did unexpectedly, gave me a delightful surprise, and was welcomed as a kind gift out of the regular way, for which certainly you can have no reason to ask pardon. It is because you like punctuality that I desire to have your letters on a fixed day. When I lately said that I preferred to receive a letter on the very day determined, and neither sooner nor later, I did not mean that one more was not always agreeable to me, on whatever day it might arrive.

Your description of the family which I had without any reason considered as French emigrants, has interested me very much, and you have divided it very suitably in your own way in your two letters. I beg you to continue it; for your account as yet contains too little about the daughter, who interests you most of all, and whom you call Theresa, to enable me to picture her to myself with sufficient distinctness. The most important feature in her portrait is yet wanting. The father, so far as I yet know him, pleases me particularly by the activity, benevolence, and humanity which you have found him to possess. I am glad that you have renewed your connection with this family. To see those again from whom we have been long separated, and even with whom all acquaintance seemed to have been dropt, produces always a strong and lively feeling. For after all it

is our relations with mankind which communicate a value to life; and the deeper and more pervasive these are, the more do we become sensible of our own individuality,—in the recognition of which, indeed, consists at bottom our peculiar happiness. Even when we do not come into direct contact with men, but only hear of them from others, as in the present case, we share in the pleasure; at least if the description paints the character in its essential, though seemingly minute, features, as is true of all your portraits. I am for this reason very glad that you have begun this narrative, and especially thank you for it. I shall follow the progress of the story in your next letter with equal, nay with greater interest, as Theresa, I expect, will appear in the continuation more fully drawn and more deeply characterized.

The circumstance, however, which rejoices me most in your letter, is what you say about your constantly increasing cheerfulness and contentment. It is a sure proof that your present external position and fortunes pretty well harmonize with your disposition. Preserve as much as possible, dear Charlotte, this state of mind. Man can always do very much for his own inward happiness, and can secure to himself what he should otherwise have to expect from outward events. All depends on strength of purpose and on a certain habit of self-subjection. This, however, is the foundation of every virtue, as it is of every great inward sentiment. You say in your letter of the 15th, “I know that everything which is essential to my happiness at present will remain as it is just now.” Certainly, dear Charlotte, you have no reason to fear that I shall ever be less to you than I am at present. You were anxious about that once before; but however groundless your fears were then, yet they were more reasonable than they would be now. It is already more than two years since that time, and you have seen how useless your alarm was, and that not the slightest alteration has taken place, but that our relation

has thereby become more dear to you, and has assumed the form which most harmonizes with your wishes. A change in me is indeed impossible. I take the most hearty interest in you and your lot; I desire your happiness, I contribute gladly to your joy, and yield cheerfully to your wishes so far as I may without being drawn out of my own circle of thoughts. I expect nothing for myself. In conformity with your character and sentiments you could not deceive me,—but indeed I am not open to the deceptions of any one. I lay claim to nothing from anybody, nor approach any one with expectations. I preserve my inward wants in such exact equipoise with my personal ability to satisfy them, that I never need to look out of myself for their gratification. I can say with truth that I never calculate on being thanked for anything; but what I do for others, if it does not appear to me in some sense a matter of indifference, takes its origin in ideas and principles which have to me a worth altogether independent of their influence on others. Nor am I ever excited by anything. What constitutes my existence is separate in itself, and does not depend on any such contingencies as agitate in a small way the lives of so many. I blame nobody: others have their ways, and I have mine. But mine is the surest and most gladdening. For this reason I am pleased with every acknowledgment and every sentiment of interest manifested towards me by others, and it gives me pleasure to be grateful. I esteem these feelings particularly as tokens of the spiritual character of those who cherish them. If one entertains for a long period such an affectionate, genuine, and respectful sentiment as you manifest, dear Charlotte, he naturally rises in my esteem. It accordingly always pleases me to see how you recognise the earnestness and self-sustaining firmness of my ideas, my independence of external things, and my habit of shaping my happiness only out of my own inward resources, and that you gladly correct your own ideas through mine in any case in which they admit of

improvement. It will certainly always and still more be so. My inward sympathy, my readiness to be beneficially useful to you, will remain unchangeable.

I beg you to write me not later than the 2d October. The autumn is wonderfully beautiful; although this is always our best season, and the one on which we can most calculate, it appears to me that it surpasses itself this year. Farewell. With sincere sympathy, yours, H.

LETTER LXXVIII.

TEGEL, October 8, 1827.

I received some days ago, dear Charlotte, your letter of the 2d October, which has rejoiced me anew, and for which I heartily thank you.

What think you of this splendid weather? It is impossible to let it pass by unmoved. I like our northern climate because the seasons have such a marked difference, and do not flow monotonously into each other. It is otherwise in southern countries. Spring there is not perceptibly distinguished from winter, as it is with us; it is rather only a milder continuation of it. The transition, however, from the torpidity and blankness of winter to the cheerful warmth of spring, makes a deep and enlivening impression on the spirits. Nature passes through autumn into the rigidity of winter, and the change and succession of these three seasons, as they are seen linked together, associate themselves with the great ideas which come always most emphatically home to man,—the torpor of death and the resurrection to a new life. These changes and transition-states are equally represented, though in quite different forms, by what we see and experience around us, and by what arises in the inward depths of the soul. But Nature presents this most vividly in the changes of the seasons, in the depositing of the seed within the earth, which covers it with maternal affection, in its upspringing into new life, and in many other phenomena which may be regarded as symbols and allegories of this idea. It is indeed the great thought of Nature herself, whose very existence consists in a perpetual self-renovation. Were men always thoroughly pene-

trated with this idea, they would much oftener give a different direction to their thoughts, feelings, and actions, than they do. They would be sensible that the whole purpose of life is to arrive at a certain maturity, in the possession of which alone it is possible to make the passage out of a limited and imperfect condition into one more free and complete. For we cannot imagine that death and a resurrection to a new state of existence are merely accidents, or depend on outward events. A departure from life, whether it be early or late, certainly stands in vital relation to the inward being of the individual, and is always a token that, in the view of the Almighty, from whom nothing is concealed, a further development on this stage of existence would not be advantageous for him who is quitting it. In like manner, death may not have the same influence on all persons: it may operate differently, for example, on him who has attained in life to a higher and more spiritual maturity, and on him who on the contrary has lagged behind. Death and a new life always take hold of that which they already find waiting for them. Man must therefore cultivate this maturity in himself; and the ripeness for death and for a new life is one and the same thing. For it consists in a separation from earthly interests, an indifference to earthly pleasure and earthly activity; it is a life of ideas which take no hold of the world, a withdrawal from the desire after happiness; it is, in short, a state of mind in which one is unconcerned about the manner in which he is here dealt with by fate, and looks only to the goal after which he aspires,—in which, therefore, he exercises his power of self-denial, and gains a brave mastery over himself. Out of this condition of mind there arises the cheerful, fearless composure which, needing nothing from without, spreads itself over life like a second sky—a spiritual one—answering to the unclouded blue of heaven which overspreads the visible canopy.

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The conclusion of the description of your renewed acquaintance with the family of S—— has also greatly interested me. The youngest daughter, Theresa, must be a singularly amiable person, and must possess unusual mental and personal accomplishments. Her picture is most attractive, even should it have been drawn with an affectionate pencil, and I again heartily thank you for it.—With unalterable sympathy, yours,

H.

LETTER LXXIX.

TEGEL, October 26, 1827.

Make no excuses, dear Charlotte, should you ever write a post later than the day on which I may have expressed a wish for a letter. You are always so punctual and attentive, that I am sure, when it so happens, some unavoidable obstacle has come in the way of writing. Besides, I fix the days only because you wish it.

In your last letter you said quite rightly that the 18th October, which immediately after the event that appeared then so astonishing was intended to be always celebrated, is already almost forgotten. It will certainly be still commemorated in Hamburg, but I believe nowhere else. It is in the nature of things for one event to tread on the heels of another; and it is scarcely possible that any one should occupy our attention for a very long time. The beneficent consequences, however, are inwardly remembered with gratitude: we think of the wonderful arrangements of destiny, by which the human race won such an advantage on a certain memorable day; but the lively joy which transports us amid the universal jubilee dies away, and what shortly after the moment appeared a most extraordinary event,—nay, a real miracle,—is soon regarded as a thing in the ordinary course of affairs. Even should this be wrong, it is yet natural, and has taken place ever since the beginning of the world. For myself I cannot very much blame it. Everything belonging to statesmanship and the interests of the world is, in all outward respects, of the greatest importance; it creates and destroys in a moment the happiness, often the existence, of thousands; but as soon as the wave of the moment has rushed by, and the storm is laid, its influence is lost, and

even frequently disappears without leaving a trace behind. Many other things, silently determining the thoughts and feelings, make often a far deeper and more lasting impression on us. Man can for the most part keep himself very independent of all that does not directly interfere with his private life,—a very wise arrangement of Providence, since it gives a much greater security to individual happiness. It is also certain, that the more firmly men adhere to their individuality, the more blessed is the influence which they exercise on the dispositions and happiness of others. These views, it is true, are a good deal at variance with the prevalent ideas of right and wrong: what, according to these, is deemed of greatest importance, becomes almost indifferent, and a peculiar significance is conceded to what is little thought of. But they are not the less true on that account; and they will certainly be accepted by all whose spiritual sense has not been entirely blunted by the conventional arrangements of society. The different epochs of life, too, modify our opinions of these matters. To youth and early manhood, everything which is enacted on a large theatre speaks with more than ordinary force; while age strips off the false glitter of things, although it does not regard them as hollow and empty, nor without their due significance. We learn to seek and to value only the purely human element in them, and this proves itself unchangeable so long as we have strength to associate ourselves with it.

LETTER LXXX.

December 1827.

We stand once more at the close of a year. The month which brings the year to an end (we have already often dwelt on this subject in our letters) has always for me something at once solemn and exciting. We say indeed a thousand times to ourselves that the divisions of the year are arbitrary and unimportant, and that, in fact, should we wholly forget which week, month, or year it was in which we were living, time would flow on just as much improved or neglected by us as it is now turned to account or misapplied. But this dry, rational philosophy takes no hold upon actual life, and there is no one with the least sensibility who ever suffers the 31st of December and the 1st of January to pass like any other two successive days. It is as if man tried, by distributing time into parts, to put a stop to its flight, or at least to interrupt its unbroken course. Time itself, it is true, never pauses; but man is made to stand, so to speak, upon a narrow boundary between the past and the future, where he tranquilly collects his thoughts, takes into view the period of time which has just flown, and invests that which is approaching with new purposes, projects, hopes, and cares. I should not like ever to lose the occasions and opportunities of so doing. Let us need them as little as we may, it is nevertheless well to be admonished in this way. For time is peculiarly a monitor: he admonishes by the fact that the steps which he has once taken can never be retraced;—he presses likewise on the present through the uncertainty of the future; while man remains fixed between this certainty of time past on the one hand, and the uncertainty of what is to come on the other, always conscious

that the period which has been suffered to pass unimproved is irrecoverable, and yet unable to foresee whether the future will afford a chance of redeeming the lost opportunity. Besides, I attach much importance to whatever is characteristic of certain, or rather of all epochs in life. Each period is accompanied by its own manners, habits, and requirements, and wisdom just consists in not assigning to one period that which belongs to another.

I have, as you know, dear Charlotte, a peculiar love for the clear, starry, winter nights, and I rejoice not only that you share this feeling of mine, as you do so many others, but also, as you say, that I have contributed to strengthen it in you. Yes, it often delights me to think that our glances doubtless frequently meet in some planet or constellation during the bright and beautiful winter nights which we have at present, since you see from your house a wide and free horizon on all sides. The joy I feel on such occasions is certainly connected more or less with habit. In my youth, so early as my twentieth year, I used to stroll for whole nights through the streets here, or wherever I was residing. When I gaze on the motions and revolutions of the stars it always strikes me that it is only the divisions of time of which I have just been speaking which knit us to these distant worlds: through these we refer their corresponding positions to certain periods in our destiny, and ourselves to some epoch in their course.

This exercise through which we become immersed as it were in these remote distances, and lose ourselves in this crowd of worlds which present themselves to the eye like a single sea of light, gives me quite a peculiar delight, and so enchains me that I cannot break from it even after many hours' continuance. Should Jupiter be visible, I always turn to him first, and rejoice in his clear, mild, fair light; I then pursue the immeasurably distant fixed stars, and delight when the eye at last loses itself in the indistinct shimmer of the milky-way. Even simply to look into the deep night as

it strikes off into empty space is fine, especially now while the moonless nights are so completely and inexpressibly dark. In general it is worthy of admiration how much pleasure is communicated by fixedly and continuously gazing on quite simple objects in nature. You have doubtless sometimes sat by a pool or lake merely for the purpose of allowing the eye and the thoughts to become absorbed in contemplation of the water. To do so is to me one of the greatest enjoyments; and the smallest rivulet, the quietest pool, or the most unimportant lake, is sufficient for this purpose. It is the pure, clear, untroubled element, which exercises this power over me. I have always easily understood how it has been imagined that there are water-sprites who draw beneath the surface any one who sits on the edge of a stream or lake. There is certainly a strong attractive power, and I sometimes feel as if I could willingly plunge into the depths in order to lie there in eternal peace. There is in this feeling no dissatisfaction with the land, nor any aversion to what it produces; it springs from a pure love to the liquid element.—It is in general a prejudice to think that in order to enjoy nature we must have before us some beautiful aspect of it. However undeniable it may be that beauty exalts the charm, yet the pleasures of nature are not inseparable from it. Natural objects themselves, without making any pretension to beauty, awaken the feelings and occupy the fancy. Nature gives joy and animation, simply because it is nature. We recognise in her an illimitable might, greater and more efficient than all human powers put together, and yet exciting no alarm; for every object in Nature meets our view as with an air of mildness and beneficence, since her universal expression is goodness in greatness. Even in cases where the scenery is composed of frightful rocks and objects of terrible beauty, yet Nature herself by no means inspires us with fear. We soon grow trustful, and feel ourselves at home amid the wildest and most desolate recesses, and we see that they yield peace and

tranquillity to him who, hermit-like, seeks repose among their solitudes.

I am very sorry to learn that you suffer from low and depressed spirits, and it moves me to see how brief and slight an allusion you make to the matter, in order to withdraw me from its consideration. I know that in a life which, so far from being free of care, is rather full of it, unpleasant and vexatious events will arise to disturb the equanimity, as well as painfully to disappoint the soul of that peace for which it longs, and of which it stands so much in need. But these are states of mind which resemble the clouds, now rising and spreading out in gay and bright forms, and at another time gathering in thick and gloomy masses; it is not always possible to see from whence they came, nor whither they go;—but the sun dispels them. The will of man is the sun to his soul. When, however, the soul is heavily oppressed with suffering, will is not sufficient: we then need faith. Faith alone can raise us above the petty affairs of daily life and worldly impulses, and give to the soul a direction towards something higher—towards those objects and ideas which alone are of value and importance. You possess something—yes, it dwells in you, dearest Charlotte—which you certainly esteem more than all which men are accustomed to call inward happiness. It is the peace of the soul. This is won and preserved in very different ways, according to the various directions in which mankind look for it. He who lives in the full enjoyment of the comforts and even of the luxuries of life, needs this peace quite as much as he who is borne down with sorrows and cares. But he reaches it with more difficulty, for this peace is a simple feeling which is difficult of attainment amid complicated relations. It is indeed grounded in peace and purity of conscience; but something more than this is required for its realization. We must feel ourselves satisfied with our lot, and be able to say with calmness and truth that we have not murmured at our fortune, but received it

when happy with humility, and when adverse with resignation and with genuine trust in the wise arrangements of God. As the difficulty of a situation heightens the merit of him who maintains himself in it without complaint, or who frees himself from it by his own efforts, in proportion as it is difficult and perplexing, so, in the way alluded to, do we attain a harmonious agreement with our lot, whatever it may be. You know, dear Charlotte, and exercise all these aids yourself. You need only to have confidence in your inward strength, and you will assuredly overcome the heavy and oppressive gloom of which you complain at present, if there be no other external ground of your feeling than I know of,—which, if there be, may in many subtle ways act upon your spirits. How earnestly I desire that everything which either in reality or in fancy has troubled you during the past year may vanish, and that the new one may commence cheerfully and happily! With this heartfelt wish,

yours, H.

LETTER LXXXI.

BERLIN, January 1828.

. The departure of the year has always a certain touch of solemnity in it,—greater, in my opinion, than a birthday, as well as quite different from it. The latter has reference only to an individual, and even for him it is but one departure among those of the whole year. But the new year is a renewal of epochs to all, and it accordingly awakens a universal sympathy. The year itself, including the period which has just left us and that which is newly arrived, is regarded as a person of whom we take leave as well as whom we greet. Each year has its own historical events which weave themselves into our personal fate even when we have taken no share in them, as when we, almost by involuntary effort, just remember to have heard, by the merest accident, of some public occurrence or other. It is, however, no simple fancy that the years are fortunate or unfortunate for mankind, or that men are in the habit of considering them as they fall under the one class or the other. In this remark I do not allude to great misfortunes, but I speak of those minor errors in every undertaking—the disappointment of joyful expectations which have been formed either in one way or another; just as there are days, for example, in which we do everything unskilfully: each moment brings forth something disastrous; we say what we ought not, and, as often happens in a dream, we never arrive at the object after which we are aspiring. All that is certainly less dependent on fortune than on man himself, who always forms his own lot. It often depends on our first impressions of the year, which may weaken our confidence in our future

fortunes, or even inspire us with fear or at least with anxiety. The whole matter is sometimes a mere fancy. Thus it is with the date of the year. When it contains many odd numbers, one has, as it were, every reason for entertaining a sort of apprehension of disaster; but when, on the other hand, we have such beautifully even numbers as in 1828, we become inspired with a certain joyful assurance, and embark in such a year with a cheerful feeling, as in a passage-boat, from whose fair proportions and equipments we gather a sort of promise that we shall be transported safely to the shore of the next year.

When I said that each one shaped his own destiny, I uttered an old proverb, certainly of Pagan origin, but which has a very just meaning when taken in the Christian sense of the phrase. I speak, that is to say, of our inward fate—of the sentiment with which man receives impressions from external events, and that is always within our power. We can always preserve a state of mind which shall be submissive, resolute, and confident in the beneficent arrangements of a higher power; and should this frame of mind be wanting in us, we can produce it. Unless man in this way depends solely on himself, he has no true freedom.

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While Providence determines the lot of mankind, the spiritual being of men is also brought into concord with it. There is such a harmony in this—(as there is indeed in all the arrangements of nature)—that it would be possible to explain and deduce the one from the other without a higher ordination. But the fact only so much the more clearly and surely proves the existence of this higher ordination which has created such a harmony in existence.

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I intend to undertake a long journey in the latter half of March, and will not return for six months. My youngest daughter, as you know, is married to M. von Bülow, who is at present Prussian ambassador at London. He has been

there for several months, and my daughter wishes to follow him with her three little girls. My wife, my eldest daughter, and myself, mean to accompany them. We shall go by Paris, stop there for some time, and afterwards proceed to London, where we shall remain for perhaps six weeks. From London, my wife, my eldest daughter, and myself, will return to Paris, and proceed by Strasburg and Munich to Gastein, where we shall take the usual baths. According to this arrangement, we shall probably be back again about the end of September. I look forward to the journey with much pleasure, and the only thing which interferes with it is the necessity I am under of reaching Gastein by the middle of August. I am fond of the place, it is true, and like very well to be there, but I should prefer to spend more time in London on this occasion, even though my return here should be later. The baths will thus restrict my stay within certain limits. I shall revisit Paris and London with great pleasure. When I am not in the country, I prefer to live in the large cities. One feels again in solitude when in the midst of the whirl of life. Such a journey as we propose appears a very considerable one,—and so it is if we reckon by the number of miles; but if we count the days which are passed in actual travel, we shall not find them so many after all. We shall never travel during night, for which reason it will be much less fatiguing than it seems at first sight. The weather may indeed be still cold and unpleasant in March, but the month of April is usually fine in Germany; and should it be raw in May, we shall at least be in the milder climate of France. My son-in-law has already got his house in London into perfect order, so that we shall avoid the inconveniences which one generally experiences in a strange place. I do not consider Paris strange;—I lived there for some years with my wife and family during the early part of my married life, and had two children born there. My wife afterwards resided in it for some months without me, and during the war I was there twice without her. It is now eleven

years at least since I was in Paris, and when I quitted it the last time by night, I thought that I should never return. I looked with the same feeling at the rocky coast of England when I left it in the year 1818. Fate has strangely ordered that I should again unexpectedly see these places, and that my son-in-law should occupy the same situation which I then filled. He will probably remain a long time in London, which will be an inducement to me to repeat my visits frequently.—My return to Paris and London has just recalled to my thoughts that some one has very prettily said that we gladly visit those places only which we have known in earlier years. The remark has arisen from a very accurate observation of things, for it is certainly true, and it does honour to the feelings of man. We regard places as we do men, and we feel a desire to visit those people only with whom we are already acquainted.

The joy which the starry heavens communicate to your tranquil life gives me additional pleasure, since it has been elevated and increased by the expression of mine. I gladly answer your questions, at least as far as I am able. I can scarcely understand why the countless number of the stars, the infinity of space, in one word the boundlessness of creation, should have in earlier times appeared fearful to you, and I rejoice that this feeling has left you. The greatness of nature is one of the most exalting, cheering, and gladdening ideas which I know; still more, however, is this true of the greatness of the Creator. Should we even be obliged to allow that the idea of greatness awakens in us a depressive feeling, yet it recovers its elevating and benign influence when it is considered in connection with the boundless goodness which expresses itself in all the works of creation. In general, however, it is only physical power and greatness which inspire us with a feeling in some sense terrible and oppressive. But if there be seen an infinite physical might in the creation and the universe, much more is there manifest a moral force which rules in everything. This form

of power, however, which is the really sublime species of it, always enlarges the spiritual capacity of man, makes him breathe more freely, and ever appears to him in the mild aspects of comfort, help, and shelter. One may say with truth that this creative, almighty greatness lets itself be seen equally in everything, and excites ever the same admiration by its attractive strength. But one may with equal truth maintain, that it reveals itself in the stars of heaven with peculiar simplicity. The celestial bodies strike the fancy more powerfully; everything connected with them is to be explained only by number and measurement, while yet they baffle both through their infinity. It is exactly because these bodies are so simple in their relations as to throw us back on mathematics for an explanation, that we better realize the extent of the sky than the magnitude of the earth with the creatures inhabiting it.—Write me, dear Charlotte, on the 26th, and be convinced that all you say has for me a peculiar interest, and is always welcome. Farewell, and reckon on my unalterable sympathy,

H.

Life is a gift which always comprises so much that is valuable to one's self, and, if we be willing, so much that is useful for others, that we have every reason to cultivate a disposition not only to pass it in cheerfulness and mental satisfaction, but, from a real sense of duty, to do everything in our power to embellish and render it advantageous both to ourselves and others.

Earnestness in life, even when carried to an extreme, is something very noble and great; but it must not be allowed to disturb the common business of life, else it will yield only bitterness and produce injury.

LETTERS LXXXII—III.

BERLIN, March 21, 1828.

I am rejoiced to have it in my power to say that the plan of our journey is so altered that we shall go by Cassel. Our arrangements are to leave this on the 31st, which will enable us to reach Cassel on the 2d of April. We shall at all events remain there a night, possibly the following day also, and therefore two nights.

I am very happy in the prospect of seeing you. It will only be for an hour or two, but it is pleasant, however short may be the time, to see each other again. Should I arrive in time I will call on you the same evening, but if it be too late, you may expect me the next day, even though it should be the evening before I can be with you. Should I be early enough, however, and remain also the following day, I shall see you on both days. Farewell. H.

On the way.

I thought yesterday up till five o'clock that I should be able to see you again, but something came in the way. If you had been living nearer, I might have seen you for half an hour. As it was, it was impossible.

It has given me great joy to have beheld you in your own house, and has left a most agreeable impression on my mind. I shall certainly soon write you, dear Charlotte, from Paris, where I expect to find a letter from you.

H.

LETTER LXXXIV.

PARIS, April 23, 1828.

I found, dear Charlotte, your letter of the 26th waiting my arrival here, and recognise your kind attention in having drawn for me a sketch of your dwelling. I thank you, however, with more lively gratitude for the cheerfulness which reigns throughout your letter, than even for this attention. I have been myself witness of your joy, and the delight which is expressed in this epistle has restored it with yet greater vividness to my thoughts. It has been to me a new and agreeable proof of the state of your mind, or I should rather say that I have now seen it in its living manifestation, incomparably more joyful than I found it in your letters, although it has always appeared in these up till this time. I greatly value the opportunity of having been personally with you: it has given me a vivid conception of your life, not to mention the delight of having again seen you. Life, as you have there arranged it, is very attractive, and affords evidence of the mind and skill with which you manage it. You enjoy a cheerful and comfortable solitude; and everything about your little dwelling, as well as about your garden, strikes one the moment of his arrival. And yet I saw both only in raw weather, and without the freshness and bloom of spring and summer. How much must the garden gain in beauty when seen in full luxuriant verdure! I can now think of you at every moment, since I have myself beheld every spot in which you pass your life. I consider it a most admirable arrangement by which you have separated from your usual occupations the roomy and pleasant apartment in which we were, and only use it when you have company or when you wish

to be alone. A chamber always assumes to the eye of the person who occupies it, the character of what usually goes on in it; for which reason one ought to keep some place free from all associations of ordinary business or amusement. In that case the very walls would suggest to us a train of thoughts and feelings similar to those which on former occasions we had there experienced. The same remark is true of walks in the country. With me at least it always happens, that, after a short residence in any district, various ideas and sentiments connect themselves with different localities, and the more they are appropriated to these, the stricter is the principle of association by which they are recalled and reproduced. But even the rooms up stairs, where you carry on your regular occupations, are pretty and convenient, though they are small. This contractedness, however, can communicate no feeling of constraint, so long as it is possible to escape so easily into a spacious garden. It would be quite different in town. Your whole arrangements, in which there is evidently so much judgment, order, and comfort, give rise to an impression still more pleasant and delightful, inasmuch as it is plain that you have yourself shaped and continue to preserve this way of existence. I certainly hope that your arrangements will be productive of yet happier consequences, although I cannot help thinking that you might enjoy a life of less exertion and more leisure for the cultivation of your own tastes. I need not say how lively and sincere an interest I should take in the realization of this wish.

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We stopped three days in Frankfort. I regretted so long a stay there, as it has robbed us of just so many days longer stay here; otherwise I should have liked it well enough, for I have been always partial to Frankfort, and indeed there are very few cities in Germany which could bear comparison with it. It is distinguished in particular by two features. First, it has exceedingly beautiful environs. I do not speak

here simply of the finely arranged plantations which surround the city, but of the district itself. The Taunus range of mountains presents from several points a most charming view, to which the river contributes. Another thing is, that the town gives you an impression of its being inhabited by a population in affluent, or at least in comfortable circumstances, — not accompanied here, as is often the case in other large cities, by poverty and conspicuous wretchedness. This circumstance goes very far towards marring our pleasure in many places. We always sympathize with the whole community up to a certain point; and it is not agreeable to meet with too great a contrast in the external condition of the people.

From Frankfort we made rapid progress, and arrived in Paris on the fourth day, before the usual hour of dining, which is universally six o'clock. Travelling in France is by no means particularly agreeable. The roads are at present in part bad, indeed very bad—on the whole only tolerable—but nowhere very good. Good inns are to be found only in the largest provincial towns, as for example in Lyons. The look of the country and its inhabitants has nothing at all attractive or interesting. What has always most displeased me in France, however, is the appearance of the villages. They are not at all equal to our German hamlets. They consist either of a few houses which rise quite unexpectedly on one or on both sides of the road, without any trees, not surrounded by a garden or by anything which suggests one, or they resemble our market-places, and have nothing about them in the least degree rural. The inhabitants are no better. They have either a very poor or a very city-like appearance. In particular, the women and girls are far from being pretty or attractive. Their wooden clogs, however, which are so heavy and uncouth, contribute in a great degree to give them this disagreeable aspect. The uninteresting air of the country people and their dwellings detracts very much from the pleasure of travelling in France, and is remarked by all

who pass through it. In Paris, however, I feel myself very comfortable. I pursue a mode of life quite opposite to my usual one. I walk or drive about the whole day, and literally I am at home only for an hour after rising, a few hours before going to bed, and sometimes, though seldom, a short while at mid-day. As I have been several times here since my first visit in 1789, I have made very many acquaintances, and these are always increasing. Then there are so many things to see, that the day goes lightly by, however long it may appear.

Paris has grown very much more beautiful during the thirteen years that I have been absent. Many single buildings of great beauty, and even entire streets and districts, have sprung up in the interval. The comfort, luxury, and population have increased, and the bustle and activity which were before so great, are now naturally greater. In the arts and sciences too, life and everything at all interesting have been improving. None of our cities can be compared to Paris. Even the largest German towns have in comparison an air of littleness about them. If one does not live in the country, a town like this is preferable to all others.

I hope soon, dear Charlotte, to receive a letter from you. To fix a day for your writing is not advisable at this distance. I only beg you to write me eight days after receipt of this letter, and again by Berlin.

I shall not leave Paris before the 15th of May; but I shall certainly leave at that date if nothing unforeseen come in the way to prevent me; but the 20th of May will be the very latest. Your letters for me addressed to London will be forwarded in the same way as to this place, and the distance is rather less.

With the deepest and sincerest sympathy, yours, H.

LETTER LXXXV.

LONDON, May 20, 1828.

We arrived here, dear Charlotte, yesterday afternoon, and I lose no time in telling you so. We are all perfectly well. . . . I have received yours, closed on the 8th;—it has touched me deeply, and I thank you for it with my whole heart. . . . It is a very pleasant remembrance that I have seen you in the midst of your household arrangements. I can assure you with perfect truth that it has left on my mind a most agreeable impression. The solitary garden-life which you lead, in entire independence of every one, has, on the three grounds that it is independent, so true to nature, and so secluded, something very fascinating. And you have yourself to thank for it; for you have created the existence which you enjoy, in the first place by a characteristic choice, and then by clear insight and a fine inventive faculty and sense of beauty, associated with habits of reflection, industry, exertion, and perseverance. You may well respect yourself for having depended solely on your own efforts, and so avoided becoming a burden to any one, at the time when you so honourably suffered the irreparable loss of your property. You have gained a freedom which few enjoy, and in which every one must esteem you. I remember very well how you arrived by degrees at the expertness which you at present possess. You once gave me so true and natural a description of it, that I shall never forget it. You tell me also in your present letter how you succeeded not long ago for the first time in giving to the under part of your house an aspect so cheerful and comfortable. Your success has been admirable. The circumstance, however,

which above all fills me with peculiar interest, is to see, that although you have no time for the reading which suits you, yet your spiritual life remains free, and is able to elevate itself in the midst of an existence calling for so much exertion as yours. You now repeat to me in writing what you told me verbally in the most pleasant manner, that you were gradually approaching to an entire agreement with my ideas—that you gather out of these the means of raising yourself—and that you are enlightened by them. Oh! how greatly has this expression of your disposition and of your womanly and exalted sentiments moved me! If it then be so, dearest Charlotte, take to your immovably trustful heart the assurance that my sentiments for you are as unchangeable as my interest in you.

* * * *

We have got on very well since I wrote you from Paris. We left that city on the 15th, and on the 19th embarked at Calais for London direct. The passage is at present made in steamboats; there is no other conveyance even for travellers, but it is a most convenient one. The boats are large, and, besides the engines, they have sails which are used when the wind is favourable, and you cross for the most part, as happened with us, in less than twelve hours from Calais to London. The weather was the most beautiful imaginable. For a few hours, as the wind was strong, we had rather a rough sea, which made the boat roll very much. Most of the passengers were sick, and many had to go to bed. I never have an unpleasant feeling on the water; and on this occasion I remained on deck, delighted with the wonderfully beautiful aspect which the sea presented. The sun-rise was particularly fine and magnificent, and it interested me the more that I had never before seen a sun-rise at sea. We steamed from the quay at three o'clock in the morning.—We have taken up our abode here with my son-in-law, and find it most pleasant to be in the bosom of our family. London always astonishes one anew by its large

size, its enormous population, and the astonishing stir and bustle which such a multitude occasions. London has fewer fine free prospects than Paris, which, owing to its large public and its numerous private gardens, has here and there something of a country aspect. But as a town,—as a place in which vast masses of population, in great variety and yet in the highest condition of well-being, are congregated together, it awakens a higher admiration.

We shall remain here for nearly two months, and then commence our journey homeward. In every case such an expedition is a great, and in our circumstances it was a difficult undertaking. But our chief object has been gained: we have brought a daughter and her children to the place of her destination. What remains to be done will I have no doubt go on as well as what has been accomplished.

Yours, H.

LETTER LXXXVI.

LONDON, June 1828.

. In order completely to compose your mind, let me say one word more about the state of my health. I cannot fully comprehend, dear Charlotte, why you are so anxious about it. It is in the nature of things, and should not surprise you, that I am older since we met in Frankfort; but I have not for one moment suffered any personal inconvenience from the hour we began our journey till the present time. I can accommodate myself without the least inconvenience to every irregularity. People here eat nothing before eight o'clock; often, however, it is nearer nine. As the hour of rising in this house is late, I breakfast at half-past nine on coffee alone, and take nothing more till dinner. You need therefore be in no way alarmed on my account.

Our stay here is drawing to a close. I am very sorry that I cannot remain longer, for there is no want of interesting objects to occupy us pleasantly for a much longer time than we can spare. There are a great many of the finest and most remarkable works of art, and an incredible wealth of statues and paintings; and this not merely in public but also in private collections, which it requires some time to discover. It is a much easier affair in Paris, where you find everything brought together into a few places. Besides, there is here much to be learned in science and philology, especially the latter, as people from every quarter of the globe meet in this city. It is at present, too, the gay season, so that one is invited out day and night without end.

July 16.

I leave this the day after to-morrow, and go again by Paris, where I shall stay only a week, and then depart for Gastein. I may perhaps stop at Munich should the King be there, as I wish to see him again. I am very much satisfied with my stay here, and leave with the consolatory reflection, dear Charlotte, that I have always made as much use of my opportunities as the circumstances allowed. I have not entirely missed anything, and have quite exhausted those objects which had a peculiar interest for me. We are all also perfectly well. The health of my wife is even better than it was. She has frequented no society, as people here always dine at eight o'clock evening, and often later, so that evening society does not begin before eleven o'clock. But she has seen everything which had an interest for her. Parliament is about to rise, and people are already leaving for the country, where they remain till March of next year. For arrangements here do not follow the season, but simply the order of public business. The field-sports also keep many in the country till late in autumn. London is then very much deserted, and you find scarcely any society. Those who have no country-seat are usually ashamed of this, and shut up their front-windows in order to make the world believe that they are in the country. Life in the country, however, is for the most part only the transposition of the society of the town. Every proprietor entertains a multitude of visitors, to whom his invitations extend to several days' stay. I may observe also that Englishmen are more open and accessible in the country than when immersed in the tumult of business and the amusements of the town.

I and my wife have sometimes been present at the church-services here, but they appear to me less edifying than they are with us. You must wait nearly two hours before the sermon commences, and these are passed in reading select portions of scripture and in rehearsals of the creed.

At this reading those who are nearest the altar, especially the children who receive instruction in religion, repeat the last words of each verse. This has naturally something very monotonous, and is in the long-run truly wearisome. The assembly sings very little, and there is as little organ-music; the voices and organ join together for a moment, and soon break off again. The sermon is likewise short, perhaps of half an hour's duration. The one which we heard was especially cold, and not at all what we should call instructive. This, as I hear, is the style and manner of most of their preachers. Then again the external arrangements are very annoying. Only a row of benches occupying perhaps a fourth part of the church, are open to all. The others are locked, but do not all belong to private parties as with us. You see two women standing in the middle of the church, at least until the sermon begins, with their faces turned towards the door. These conduct such as enter and wish to have a seat to a place on the reserved benches, and receive, at the close of the service, a small gratuity. I do not know whether they retain the whole of this to themselves, or give up a portion of it; but it is quite contrary to the spirit of the occasion to see these people engaged in a species of worldly business, and utterly indifferent to the greater part of the service. The moving about with the poor's bag by us is doubtless something still more annoying; but this is now discontinued in many churches, at least in Prussia.

The Quaker-meetings were something quite new to me. I had failed to see them when I was here before, but I have now been at one. The hall was built some years ago, and is very clean and commodious, but without the least show or ornament. The light falls from the top, nor has the apartment any other means of illumination. The meeting was very numerous, the men being on the one side, and the women on the other. The Society of Friends, as you certainly know, has no preachers. He who feels an impulse

and inward call to speak, rises and does so; but in the absence of this the assembly remains still as death. The speaker addresses the audience either from his place or from a part raised higher than the floor, where, however, many more than himself can stand, and which does not in any way resemble a pulpit. When we were present, the meeting was perfectly still for nearly the whole two hours during which it usually lasts. At length a man and two women spoke. They uttered only brief petitions, but to all appearance they were framed on the instant, and were accompanied by very short observations. What they did say, however, was in itself very good, was introduced by many quotations from the scriptures, and expressed with great feeling and sincerity.

There is here a society of ladies for the improvement of female convicts, of which you have perhaps heard or read. Several of the members of it are highly distinguished. There is a Mrs. Fry, a quakeress, the wife of a very respectable merchant, who would be called rich with us. We saw her in the chief prison of London, where she read a portion of scripture to the female convicts, and explained it in an admirable and most simple and unpretending manner. She conducted us afterwards through the prison, and we saw her also at her own house. The Society not only attends to the spiritual improvement of the prisoners, but supplies them with work and pays them for it; they are divided also into classes according to their behaviour, which produces a great emulation among them to conduct themselves properly. You cannot believe how clean, quiet, and decent the prisoners were, and yet they belong to the rudest and most degraded portion of the London rabble. The greater number of them had been condemned to transportation to Botany Bay either for life or for several years, while two were condemned to death. Still it was nearly certain that this sentence would be commuted, as capital punishment is very rarely inflicted on persons of the female sex.

At the end of my letter only, dear Charlotte, do I return you my heartiest thanks for yours, which I duly received at the proper time, and which contains, like all your letters, so much that is friendly, good, and affectionate. You may quite certainly assure yourself that these sentiments have for me, and always will have, the highest value. . . .

Farewell, and preserve for me your affectionate regards. I remain, with the same well-known unalterable sentiments,
yours, H.

LETTER LXXXVII.

SALZBURG, August 14, 1828.

I am again in Germany, dear Charlotte, and write you from a spot which might well be called the most beautiful in the country. I at least know of none which could be celebrated as more lovely. The situation is truly splendid,—a smiling and fruitful plain, from which there are views of majestic mountains on all sides, some of which lie like masses of rock hurled in upon each other. These are truly astonishing, and I have nowhere else seen anything like them. They are not composed of separate portions, and still less of single peaks, but of high, long, and connected masses of rock, with patches of table-land on their surface, covered with a fertile soil, and adorned with houses and gardens.

Our journey hither was very prosperous, with the exception of the weather, which was by no means favourable. But all that is past; and my only wish now is, that we may be favoured with better weather during our stay at the baths. In the midst of high mountains, and on so lofty a point as that on which the house we occupy stands, a point as lofty at least as the peak of the Brocken, a mild sun and genial warm air are more than simply agreeable—they are necessary to existence. Our passage from London to Calais was effected in safety: the sea, however, was high, and the heavy rolling of the boat caused much sickness. I did not suffer for one moment; on the contrary, I rather enjoyed the uproar.

I again passed a very pleasant week in Paris. I should like very much to spend a whole year there; and as my wife also likes to reside in that city, I shall probably ar-

range matters so as to effect this object. The road through southern Germany and Strasburg is very beautiful and convenient, and if we go forward to Gastein, we may very easily return to Paris for a twelvemonth after having taken our baths, and revisit Gastein for next year's baths when the period of our residence in the French capital is at an end. Much intervenes, however, between such plans and their execution, and in the present case it is rather an idea than a plan.

In Strasburg one finds an agreeable mixture of French and German character. The landscape and the population are essentially German. You become aware of this when you look across to Alsace from the beautiful mountain-ridge of Salbern, which presents one of the loveliest prospects imaginable. You behold sweetly-grouped hills and mountains, finely crowned with bushes and trees, and with the ruins of ancient fortresses on their summits—all quite in the German style, and totally unknown in France. The physiognomies and manners of the people also are on the whole marked with the German character,—the French type being only as it were grafted on the other. I find this mixture both interesting and pleasant. Seen from another point of view, we might be led to question this taste, and to condemn such a blending of races; for the result is the loss of everything which represents distinctively either the French or German character. This is especially the case as regards the language. The people have lost their hold of the one tongue, without having quite got possession of the other. Alsace, and still more Swabia, are interesting countries, both for landscape and people. If the Swabians have become a sort of proverb in Germany, that is to be ascribed to a species of naiveté which characterizes them, and which it is easy to turn into a jest by describing it as silliness. Nothing more or worse than this is meant by the nickname. The Swabians are perhaps the liveliest, most easily moved, and most imaginative of all the German tribes.

I again spent three entire days in Munich, and found the buildings and works of art in considerable progress. The King follows out his plans with the most praiseworthy steadiness and regularity. The portion already finished is of singular beauty. . . . I did not find the King in Munich, but I expect to see him on my return from Gastein. You are quite right to honour him highly, and your prayer that he may act suitably to the dignity of that monarchy which you have enthroned in your heart is worthy of you. He is certainly a superior sovereign. I have known him from his earliest years, and have always had the same opinion of him. He has a large amount of information, and even possesses that kind of knowledge which is usually called learning. He is well acquainted with Greek, and this gave power and animation to the noble and high-hearted zeal with which he advocated the freedom of the Greek nation. He still cherishes the same sentiments. There is a regular school for young Greeks in Munich, and they say that there are some very teachable and inquisitive youths among them. The young Botzaris, a son of the hero of that name, who so highly distinguished himself in the war, has one of the most striking and fascinating countenances. With this inclination of the King is connected his love of Greek art, and the whole together communicates something beautiful and interesting to his character. In addition to all this, he oversees the business of government in its minutest details.

I am glad that you continue to occupy yourself with the contemplation of the starry heavens, and I lament that my own eyes are no longer capable of attempting it. I resign very unwillingly a source of enjoyment which has so often contributed to strengthen and purify me, yet I am averse to avail myself of the aid of a glass.

Farewell, dear Charlotte.—With the liveliest sympathy,
yours,
H.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

A simple, peaceful, contented life, like that which you enjoy and have shaped to your taste, is certainly the highest blessing man can possess. According to my judgment it is not only preferable to a life of mere outward variety and change, but is at least quite equal to an existence which, though spiritual in its enjoyments, yet possesses these for only a moment at a time. Quiet and peace communicate a deeper power and a freer action to the inward being; and, according to a conviction which is the fruit of long experience, I think it always better when the spiritual life within flows outward, than when, reversely, that which is without flows inward. It seems, it is true, as if the soul could only be enriched and fertilized from without; but this is a mere delusion. What is not already in a man cannot come to him from without, and whatever appears to be derived by him from some external source is nothing but an accidental stimulus, of which the spirit avails itself for the development of its own proper resources. For the same reason it is just in proportion as a man is rich in spiritual possessions, that he is independent of outward circumstances for his development. The most insignificant external occasion ministers to his culture when his mental wealth is considerable, whereas the most powerful assistance from without will produce little or nothing in the absence of inward resources. I have often had occasion to observe this in the case of persons possessing a knowledge of the arts and sciences. It is less remarkable in men, as they very often turn their knowledge only to some ordinary purpose, and you do not think of asking in what way the sciences have operated upon their minds. But it is different

with women; and I have met with several among them who were really well informed, and even what we call learned, but who in their minds and dispositions, and indeed in their entire spiritual constitution, were no better educated, or at least enriched, than if they had been utterly ignorant of what they knew. So true it is that the soul must work independently of the external object which it embraces, and in some sense be antagonistic to it.

BATHS OF GASTEIN, Sept. 14.

You are anxious, dear Charlotte, lest it should be so cold here among the mountains as to interrupt our use of the baths. I almost feared the same thing myself. But according to my plan I could not come hither earlier in the year. It is, however, very possible that in other years I shall of my own accord choose this season for visiting this place. The weather has certainly not been constantly fair during nearly four weeks which we have spent here; but we have had such a warm air for the last eight days that we were compelled to be on our guard in our afternoon and evening walks in case of over-heating ourselves. It is only during storms that we have much wind in these connected and always narrow valleys, and with us it is exactly the wind which in the plains communicates to the air a cold and uncomfortable feeling. The sun, it is true, has influence here only for a short time daily; his beams strike on the valley itself but for a few hours, although you may see them lingering on the slopes and peaks of the mountains long after they have disappeared below. But the narrowness of the valleys, and the reflected light of the rays when they fall on the smooth surfaces of rocks, give a greater power to the sun. The weather also, according to general, and even in fact to regular experience, is here more settled in

autumn than in summer. The harvest commences towards the end of August and continues into September, while the hay-making is even later. The rural labours which you see about you, transport the imagination into an earlier season of the year. Another circumstance which still more prevents you from remarking the lateness of the autumn is, that you do not observe any falling of leaves. This certainly arises from the absence of large trees with foliage. However magnificent the growth of the trees may be, and although all the mountains in front are grown with woods to their summits, yet they are only varieties of high and umbrageous firs and splendid larches.

We have not missed our bath a single time on account of the weather. Partly, it has never been particularly cold, and partly it would not much matter though it had been so. We have baths in the same house in which we dwell, at the distance of a few paces from our chambers; and as they may be heated as much as we either need or wish, it is not possible to catch cold unless we were bent upon it. We have lately had several severe storms during which the thermometer stood at 15 or even 18 (34–40 Fahr.) The thunder breaks in these narrow craggy valleys with the most magnificent and majestic peals, and quite overpowers the din of the waterfall.

The departure of the sunlight from the higher mountains in the evening, to which I before alluded, is very fine. The sunset is here seen to most advantage in its effect on the opposite eastern mountain. The line of light rises gradually higher and higher, while the shadows below cover by degrees a larger and larger portion of the slopes, till the topmost peak alone is illuminated, and shimmers in the sun's rays like a golden knosp. At last the peak also fades away into the darkness of night. I do not get out of bed so early as to see the corresponding sight at sunrise; and indeed it is not nearly so well marked, because the western side of the valley, opposite to the rising sun, is not occupied by one

single mountain-peak as the eastern side is. But there are summits in other valleys of this range, which bear among the people the name of sun-glimpse, because they announce the rise of the sun. The loftiest cliff of this valley is called Gamskogel, or, as we should rather say, Gemskegel (*Chamois-peak.*) It is of a considerable height, and stands directly opposite to my windows, towards the north and east. It is much frequented by the visitors at the baths, as it is easy of ascent since the Archduke John got a better and smoother road made. I have not been up, however, although they say that the view from the top is uncommonly fine and extensive. From that point the entire chain of the higher summits, namely the glacier-mountains, is seen with great distinctness.

Farewell, and count with confidence on my unalterable sympathy. Wholly yours, H.

LETTER LXXXIX.

TEGEL, October 16, 1828.

It is about a year, dear Charlotte, since I last wrote you from this place. I so much the more rejoice in writing now, and thank you most sincerely for the hearty congratulations expressed in the dear letter which I found waiting me, with respect to my return to my own fair and beautiful country. Yes, dear Charlotte, you are right in recognising a peculiar source of joy in this event, and it much enhances my pleasure that you so kindly sympathize with my feelings.

We reached Berlin on the 4th, and came here in a few days after; but we intend to remain only a few weeks. The weather is already growing raw, and the month of November usually drives us into town. However pleasant my travels have been, I am very glad to be once more at home, and have found Tegel as beautiful as ever. Everything is fresh and lively, and I find here, what you observe of your own district, that but few leaves have yet fallen, notwithstanding the advanced state of the season. The house and furniture also look as pleasantly to me as they ever did. There is something about home which always addresses us with a smiling and friendly air, and touches the heart even after having just come from direct intercourse with objects that are great and beautiful.

We travelled very slowly, and might easily have arrived here by the 25th; but there was a reason for our loitering in Gastein and by the way. My wife's doctor (for I cannot call him my own, as I so rarely require his services) is accompanying the Crown-prince on his journey to Italy, and we wished to catch him somewhere on the road in order to consult him. We gained our object by taking the circuitous

route of Bamberg, where we met him. We afterwards made a visit of two days in the country. The count Giech, whose wife is a daughter of the minister Stein, besides several others of our acquaintances, live in Thurnau, and we passed some time there very pleasantly. The castle is very old, some parts of it perhaps have seen a thousand years; but it would strike the eye more finely if the small town of Thurnau did not lie so close to it. Some of the houses come into close contact with the castle, and to reach the garden you must go through the street. The neighbourhood of Thurnau, however, is very pretty; being rich in hills and woods, and various in its scenery, with a fruitful soil. The verdant shades with the dark seriousness of the pine-forests, are very delightful.

* * * *

I am very glad that the study of the stars continues to supply you with a healthful and exhilarating occupation, — and this all the more, as you say that you are often something worse than dull in spirits. You will soon be able to acquaint yourself with the sky, as you enjoy such a wide and beautiful horizon on all sides, and advance with your observations. I may here give you an advice which will certainly assist you to a knowledge of the stars. You must view the heavens according to a certain method, and regard them under general divisions. In the first place, you must seek to acquire an accurate acquaintance with those stars which never set to us, and only disappear in the effulgence of the solar light. They are to be found, as you know, only in the north, and they circulate round the pole-star. They are easily recognised, as you can see them every clear evening. In the next place, you must trace the twelve starry groups of the zodiac. You never see more than six of them at a time; but if you remain up a whole night, some will of course be seen to set and others to rise. Still there are always some which are hidden from view by the daylight. As soon as you succeed in knowing one group

well, the others will present no difficulty, as they encircle the heavens like a great girdle. No one, therefore, who thoroughly knows the order in which they follow each other, can miss the direction in which they are to be sought. The planets move in the same zone, and may greatly mislead those who are unskilled in the matter. But you can soon learn to distinguish them. If you once properly know the northern constellations, which never set, and the signs of the zodiac, you can be at no loss for the other groups.

You say very truly that the observation of the starry heavens withdraws our thoughts from the earth, and fills, comforts, and elevates the soul with higher hopes, longings, and anticipations. It certainly does so in the highest degree. When we view and reflect upon this countless multitude of stars, we are filled with a thought of terror at such a crowd circling in creation. Man feels himself in such circumstances as if he were overborne by the vastness of the idea. But the order and harmony with which all their movements are and ever will be conducted, suggest the beneficent and consolatory thought of the existence of a higher power and of a spiritual ruler, which again soothes us and removes the weight of anxiety from our minds. With unalterable sympathy, yours,

H.

LETTER XC.

BERLIN, Nov. 16, 1828.

You also complain, dear Charlotte, that it often happens as if you could not write one word—as if eyes, hand, and pen were in league against you. . . . Your last letter was certainly less prettily written than usual. The handwriting was not illegible, but one could remark the trouble it had cost you.

But I saw with greater regret that you were very dull and desponding. In such a frame of mind, dear friend, we must always separate external causes from the bias of the soul to cheerfulness and peace on the one hand, or to anxiety and trouble on the other. The spiritual element is always the most important. Real, even desolating misfortune, is supported with ease or with difficulty according as the soul is filled with bright or with gloomy thoughts. I think that with you, at present, the darker aspect of things predominates, and therefore I beseech you to struggle against its influence. It is to your low spirits that I ascribe your belief that you will soon die, without your being really unwell. You say, it is true—and doubtless with perfect sincerity—that the idea of death is to you a joyful and most acceptable thought; and nobody can understand your feeling better than myself. I have never had the slightest fear of death; at any moment I could welcome it. I see in it what it is, the natural development of life—one of those epochs in which, according to certain unalterable conditions, the human being, purified and already ennobled, rises into more satisfying and elevated states of existence. What is human consists in the gradual development of life, and what all

men share with each other should inspire no wise man with terror. He must rather bless and welcome the event as a means of gratifying his love of knowledge; and, so long as consciousness remains, he ought to watch the moment of transit—to try how long he can retain the fleeting Present. I hear it sometimes said that death must certainly be accompanied with a beneficent and delightful feeling; and this appears to me credible, even in those cases when the opposite seems to take place. Pain usually relaxes, all disquiet lays itself to rest, and almost always the newly dead, before the features have become disfigured and distorted, have an expression of peacefulness and calmness, often even of sublimity and heightened intelligence. In every case, however, it must be considered a gloomy frame of mind, which, without reason, leads one to believe himself to be near death. Death is always like a departure out of one's well-known country, and an entrance into a new and strange territory. In your case, I think, unpleasant external circumstances touch too closely on your feelings. Seek then for the cure, dear Charlotte, where you have so often found it,—in your own spirit, in that confidence which you cherish in God, and which will never abandon you. It will deliver you anew, and comfort and help will arise to you, even when you do not expect them. Always open to me your broken and disconsolate heart, and you will ever find in me that sympathy which cannot possibly change.—Wholly yours,
H.

December 16, 1828.

It will give me great pleasure to receive a continuation of the narrative of your life. You know that I take a warm and deep interest in your past history, and that all really characteristic description has for me a great charm. I am well aware, however, that to prepare such a portrait is a

matter of great difficulty, and the repugnance to give it out of one's own hand by no means easily overcome. I do not, however, refer to such disclosures as, from a fear of being unfavourably judged on their account, one would naturally be chary of making. No: there are things of a character quite the opposite of this, and the revelation of which would rather procure praise than condemnation, but which a delicate feeling would forbid to pass the lips, and would utterly refuse to commit to writing, or at least would consent to either with great difficulty. Things happen also which represent other people in a disadvantageous light, and which we should unwillingly disclose, however justly exposure might be merited. So soon, however, as in writing our biography we diverge from the principle of copying simply and exclusively from the tablets of the memory, and of renouncing the right to judge what may be uttered and what must be concealed or passed over, the charm of a description from nature vanishes. It is not a simple, nor a circumstantial, nor withal a true history. It is not a picture of the past, but a narrative drawn from the point of view belonging to a later period of life. Everybody knows, of course, that a story loses nothing of moral or spiritual truth by a circumstance here and there being related only in a partial or general manner, if the true and genuine effect of the matter on the feeling and disposition is described. When one, for example, has uttered some offensive word, it is not necessary that the word itself be repeated: we should rather pass it over if its impression on the person who was obliged to hear it be adequately represented. What I object to, however, is a narrative which is essentially false—which omits the whole scene in which such a word may have occurred, because it may be impossible to retain the word itself. I write to you at length on this subject, because I wish to express myself without any reserve on the continuation of your personal narrative. I cannot advise you to carry it further than to the point where you are sure

that you can write down everything which remains in your memory without the slightest or minutest act of suppression. This was not only possible in that part which you have already sent me, but must have been easy to one of your character; and I am persuaded that you have sincerely dealt with it in the manner I have now referred to. You had it in your power to narrate it without offending either your own or another's feelings. It is possible that this may be the case with what remains to be written; but I can easily imagine that it may be quite the reverse. For I should consider it perfectly natural for you to seek escape from the pains of memory and from the agony of tearing open afresh the scars of your wounds; while to myself the thought of causing such an offering to be made to my wishes would rob me of all that joy which the reception of each part of your life has before occasioned me. When the question is about biography, I have only one idea of it,—that of historical truth,—from which, in the great and sincere interest which I take in you, I cannot, however willing I might be, depart. I consider it, however, a good and wholesome exercise to review one's life in writing; and any delicacy of feeling which would lead to suppressions I hold to be a false delicacy, although very natural, and therefore pardonable. Nevertheless I mistrust my own feelings in this matter, for I have passed a very prosperous life in a situation entirely congenial to my tastes and wishes. I might therefore easily measure by a wrong standard others who have been in circumstances less favourable than my own. I repeat then once more, dear Charlotte, what I have often said,—follow your own heart: if you will not suffer by the task, always calculate with confidence on the great pleasure which you will thereby communicate to me, but, let me add, only under the condition that you are able to write it without suppressing the very smallest matter. You might speak to me, to use a common phrase, as to the grave. The parts of your life already in my possession lie carefully

secured in my desk, and at my death they must be thrown into the fire unread. In my situation I have opportunities for securing this which by no accident whatever could be rendered unavailing. I consider it my duty to set your mind at rest on this point,—it is a duty of gratitude for the trustful, sincere, and disinterested confidence which for so many years you have manifested towards me.

The year is on the eve of departure, and as I willingly revert to the many delightful reminiscences of joy which it bestowed on me, among which I reckon our meeting again, I cannot but glance forward with very gloomy anticipations to what the coming year may bring,—and I recognise with a touch of sadness that your feeling resembles my own. May Providence avert from you, good Charlotte, new trials! This is my hearty prayer.

Since our return my wife has been visited with a serious accumulation of maladies;—there is at least no period of recovery which can be looked forward to with any degree of probability. This greatly disturbs my prospects for the winter.

I beg you to write me on the 30th.—Farewell, and count always on my known sentiments of affection and lively sympathy for you.—Wholly yours, H.

END OF VOL. I.

